

EDUCATION AND SOCIO-SPATIAL CLOSURE: TWO CASES OF POPULAR
PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN ANKARA

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ABSTRACT

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The study, focusing on school as a locus of social exclusion, questions the persistence of inequalities in education, more specifically public school differentiation regarding educational quality and prestige. Contrary to the studies which regard school segregation as a result of families' different school choices according to their social class positions with a demand-oriented approach, the study intends to include educational supply equally in the explanation developed to address educational inequalities. Its focus on school allows this, also to include the spatial dimension of educational inequalities in the analysis due to the fact that school is where these two meet geographically. The empirical focus of the study is on popular public middle schools which receive high demand out of their enrolment areas. Based on the empirical findings of field research conducted in two public middle schools located in two districts of Ankara, the thesis argues that public school differentiation is a joint product of school principals, teachers and parents. While investigating the strategies and actions of the parents who send their children to these public schools in the distance with a purpose of accessing better quality education, the study contextualizes parents' strategies institutionally and spatially. Making use

of Bourdieu's field theory for this purpose, the study uncovers the relationality between the actions of actors and structural inequalities in creation of inequalities within schools, and develops the concept of socio-spatial closure to conceptualize the spatiality of educational inequalities created through the interplay between structure and agency.

Keywords: Education, access to education, social exclusion, closure, Ankara

ÖZ

EĞİTİM VE SOSYO-MEKANSAL KAPATMA: ANKARA'DA İKİ POPÜLER DEVLET OKULU ÖRNEĞİ

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Bir sosyal dışlama mahalli olarak okula odaklanan çalışma, eğitimdeki eşitsizliklerin devamlılığını, daha spesifik olarak ise, eğitim kalitesi ve prestij açısından devlet okulları arasındaki farklılaşmayı sorgulamaktadır. Okullar arası ayrışmayı, talep odaklı bir yaklaşımla ailelerin toplumsal sınıf pozisyonlarına göre farklılaşan okul tercihlerinin bir sonucu olarak ele alan çalışmaların aksine bu çalışmada, eğitimdeki eşitsizliklere yönelik geliştirilen açıklamada eğitim arzına eşit olarak yer verilmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Okula odaklanması, eğitimin hem arz hem de talep tarafını dikkate almayı sağlarken, aynı zamanda eğitim eşitsizliklerinin mekansal boyutunu da analize dahil etmeye olanak verir, çünkü okul bu ikisinin coğrafi olarak karşılaştığı yerdir. Çalışmanın ampirik odağını, kayıt alanları dışından yüksek talep gören popüler devlet orta okulları oluşturmaktadır. Ankara'nın iki ilçesinde bulunan iki devlet orta okulunda gerçekleştirilen saha araştırmasının ampirik bulgularına dayanarak, devlet okulları arası farklılaşmanın okul müdürleri, öğretmenler ve velilerin ortak ürünü olduğu iddia edilmektedir. Çalışma, kaliteli eğitime erişim amacıyla çocuklarını uzak mesafedeki bu devlet okullarına gönderen velilerin stratejilerini ve eylemlerini araştırırken, velilerin stratejilerini kurumsal ve mekansal

bağlamına yerleştirir. Bu amaçla Bourdieu'nun alan teorisinden yararlanan çalışma, okullardaki eşitsizlikleri üreten aktörlerin eylemleri ile yapısal eşitsizlikler arasındaki ilişkiselliği ortaya çıkarır. Aktör ve yapı arasındaki ilişkisellekle üretilen eşitsizliklerin mekansallığını kavramsallaştırmak için de sosyo-mekansal kapatma kavramını geliştirir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eğitim, eğitime erişim, sosyal dışlama, kapatma, Ankara

*To street animals who are subjected to systematic violence and brutality
in this country*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| EBA | Eđitim Biliřim Ađı |
| LGS | Liselere Geiř Sistemi |
| MoNE | Ministry of National Education |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| PISA | Programme for International Student Assessment |
| TEOG | Temel Eđitimden Ortađđretime Geiř Sistemi |
| TIMSS | Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study |

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The thesis focuses on education, more specifically schools, as the venues of social exclusion, and questions why educational inequalities, specifically public school differentiation, exist and persist to be a problem pointed out by the public authorities despite the state investments. Investigation into this question requires to look at educational supply as well as demand. At the same time, since educational supply and demand meet geographically at schools, public school differentiation is a geographical issue. The thesis claims that educational inequalities in the context of school differentiation are generated by the exclusionary practices of the actors that form some schools as socio-spatial closures. I will reveal how educational inequalities are created at school level by the reciprocal practices of the actors of both the demand and supply sides of education with the help of Bourdieu's field theory, and the concept developed at the end will be socio-spatial closure. I will discuss this on the basis of the empirical findings of field research conducted in two public middle schools located in two districts of Ankara. Firstly, I identified the districts in Ankara (Çankaya and Keçiören) based on the analysis of the inequalities stemming from the educational supply, and its geographical distribution. Then I selected one middle school from each district and had in-depth interviews with parents, school principals, deputy principals and teachers in these two schools, and investigated the relationship between the practices of the actors and structural inequalities in the creation of public school differentiation.

Whether education contributes to the diminishment of social inequalities or perpetuates and intensifies them is a longstanding debate, and different approaches have different answers. While the (mainstream) liberal functionalist approach regards education as a means to achieve just allocation of positions within society, from a

critical perspective, the reproductionist approach asserts that education systems reproduce existing social inequalities. An important difference that gives rise to these two opposing views is that while the latter problematizes the structures and processes internal to education, for example, the characteristics of educational institutions, and connects these to macro societal structures and processes, the former regard education as neutral to the social inequalities and the link established between education and social inequalities is external (Moore, 2004). Contrary to the reproductionist approach's emphasis on the role of educational institutions in the transmission of social hierarchies into academic hierarchies through exclusion and selection in the guise of neutrality (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), according to the mainstream understanding, education promotes social mobility since it guarantees the distribution of rewards/resources according to merit, rather than inheritance, and accordingly, it is assumed that extension of education on the basis of equal opportunity in access contributes to the diminishment of social inequalities (Sadovnic, 2007).

Extension of education in the last decades is remarkable. Parallel to the common public opinion that associates education with occupational and economic gains, the demand for more years of education has increased dramatically in both developed and developing countries over the last decades (Attewell, 2010). Recent data reveal that higher education correlates with better employment results. For example, the employment rate among those with tertiary education attainment is 6% higher than those with upper secondary education attainment, and 26% higher than those with below upper secondary education attainment (OECD, 2022).

Extension of education and increasing demand for higher education is parallel with the global trend in Turkey. There is a dramatic increase in the rates of schooling over the last two decades that allows one to assert universalization of participation in education, especially for primary and lower secondary education levels (OECD, 2020). The impact of the government's emphasis on expanding participation in schooling in order to provide equality of opportunity is significant in this development. It is the primary objective stated in the first four-year strategic plan (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı [MEB], 2009) developed by the Ministry of National

Education. The belief in the role of education in promoting social mobility is clearly seen in the national planning documents. For example, in a specialized commission report within the scope of the eleventh development plan (2019-2023), education is mentioned as “the institutional mechanism that is expected to provide a real opportunity for children to build their lives differently from the conditions of the families in which they were born” (Kalkınma Bakanlığı, 2018, p. X). However, in the same report, it is also underlined that the main determinant of what kind of education children will receive in Turkey is the socio-economic status of families. It is stated that inequalities among the schools regarding their resources are significant, and these inequalities are not only seen between public and private schools, but also among the public schools (Kalkınma Bakanlığı, 2018, p. 30). The correlation between the socio-economic status of families and educational quality the children receive is demonstrated by various studies and research reports. They show that the schools in Turkey are segregated in terms of academic achievement and socio-economic prosperity (Kitchen et al., 2019), and students from different socio-economic backgrounds are less likely to attend at the same schools in Turkey (Kesbiç, 2019; OECD, 2019b). Parallel to these, the emphasis on eliminating inequalities between schools, and improving access to the same quality education seems to have intensified in the last four-year strategic plan (2019-2023) of the Ministry of National Education (MEB, 2019).

Despite growing rates of schooling, inequalities among the schools and reliance of educational quality the children receive on the socio-economic status of their families suggest that the role of education in promoting social mobility is not equal for all. It is limited, especially for the ones among the lower segments of society. This means that the relationship between education and social inequalities is not external as assumed by the liberal understanding, and supports the reproductionist emphasis on educational structures and processes.

In Turkey, in the face of increasing demand for education that exceeds the supply, private investments are supported by the state as a solution. Another solution is to limit access to schools through competitive central exams, which creates selective schools and school hierarchies regarding prestige. While the affluent families send

their children to the private schools, the number of which has increased considerably in recent decades, the families, apart from those deprived of resources, who stay in the public education sector for various reasons need to develop strategies to access quality education or prestigious schools within this unequal and competitive schooling structure. These families correspond to a particular segment of the middle-class for whom education has a particular importance as a means for social mobility. In this context, how they deal with the unequal educational structure and processes for social mobility function of education gains importance. One of the indicators, which is quite common, especially in the metropolitan cities of Turkey, of these families' attempts to this end is their daily spatial mobility via school service buses in order to improve their access to better quality education/prestigious schools. This demonstrates that the social mobility function of education assumed by the mainstream understanding is not independent from the spatial mobility of families. Thus, the relationship between education and social inequalities depends on the education systems as claimed by the reproductionists, as well as the spatiality of education systems.

Within this context, the thesis focuses on the socio-spatial strategies of the families in Ankara to obtain better quality education for their children by sending them to relatively successful/prestigious public schools. The departure point of the study rests on a questioning of a simple observation; why are there so many school service buses in metropolitan cities like Ankara where the school placement system is neighborhood-based in primary and lower secondary education? Given the residential address-based character of the public schooling system in Turkey, the concentration of school service buses indicates a spatial mismatch between the supply and demand sides of the education and uneven geographical distribution of educational provision. Moreover, the concentration of school service buses in front of certain public schools, indicates high demand for certain public schools.

How some public schools differentiate from others and become popular among the parents, why parents send their children to the public schools in the distance, rather than the (compulsory) neighborhood schools are the main questions to be

investigated aiming at finding the socio-spatial dynamics that play role while parents having position regarding the state-centered education system in Turkey.

Unlike the prevailing studies in the related literature which mainly focus on the demand side of education with a sociological perspective, the thesis intends to include the supply side from a public policy perspective equally, and focuses on the schools where supply and demand sides of education meet geographically as the research object. In that sense, particular characteristics of the education system in Turkey and educational practices of families are considered in relation to each other in creation of educational inequalities.

The study is retroductively framed around two vantage points: 1- Public-private school distinction in terms of educational quality can be an important indicator of educational inequalities in some respects in Turkey, but a closer look demonstrates that differentiation exists within both public schools and private schools in a way that makes this distinction insufficient for a full understanding of educational inequalities. 2- Parents' perceptions of successful school is highly connected to the socio-spatial characteristics of educational setting in the city, rather than just being a matter of score. Related to these, further points that can be suggested are as follows: 3- Differentiation of schools with regard to their popularity/desirability is quite a spatial process in that both uneven geographical distribution of educational provision and residential segregation are influential, and 4- Access to "popular" schools is subject to negotiations and struggles between parents, teachers, school administrations, as well as determined by school placement regulations.

In that sense, it is argued that socio-spatial closure produced via negotiations and struggles among parents, school principals and teachers on a daily basis is crucial for the creation of educational inequalities. In order to examine this, the study focuses on school as a socio-spatial field for the analysis. Dealing with school as a socio-spatial field allows us to see the schooling practices and strategies of parents and educational professionals in the schools to maintain their position in relation to each other, also to grasp the hierarchical structure of the educational field in accordance with the values specific to it. To reveal the interplay between structure and agency

that is mostly overlooked by the studies in the related literature will be a contribution to the literature, also showing that spatiality is a constituent aspect of the field will be a theoretical contribution.

1.1. Research question and methodology

In accordance with the observation which constitutes the departure point of the research, the contradiction between the residential address-based school placement system and the extensiveness of school service buses in metropolitan cities, the research question was first formed as follows: Why do some families send their children to the public schools in the distance, rather than the (compulsory) neighbourhood school? This was a question heavily relied upon the investigation of the factors which affect the school decisions of the parents, including the factors which lead them to reject/avoid neighbourhood schools. The target group for the research was the parents of public schools with high student population coming out of their enrolment area, so the parents of “popular schools” as called in the thesis.

After the pilot interviews with parents, school principals and teachers, I realized that school principals and teachers are also crucial for the decisions of the parents, but not as the factors that affect the parents’ decisions, but as the actors whose practices and perceptions are crucial in the formation of the schools as “popular”. Therefore, I understood that the phenomenon we face is differentiation of these schools among other public schools, rather than the decisions and actions of the parents, or more precisely, covering the actions and decision-making process of the parents. Accordingly, I reformulated the research question as follows: How do some public schools differentiate among others and become popular? As mentioned, this question requires to examine the school decisions of the parents as well, but the parents’ decisions are only a part of the investigation. Determination of the research problem as school differentiation and formation of popular schools leads us to turn our attention to the schools as organizations of educational service delivery and decisions and actions of both supply and demand side actors, school professionals (principals, deputy principals and teachers) and parents, but contextualizing them socially, institutionally, also geographically.

Thus, after the pilot interviews, it was clear that the research would get beyond the decisions and actions of the agents who correspond with not only the parents but also the school professionals, considering their perceptions and interpretations. Moreover, it would account for the spatial dimension of school differentiation. Actually, it was clear from the very beginning of the research that school differentiation is a spatial phenomenon, and therefore the study should be based on a spatialized analysis. As seen, I adopted retroductive research strategy which is based on a cyclic logic rather than linear reasoning as in the inductive and deductive research strategies, I had assumptions after reviewing the related literature and pilot interviews, and research mostly intended to clarify these assumptions. In defining the methodological approach to be adopted in the research, I considered two issues that came to the fore in the pilot interviews:

1) The interviews with parents have shown that the reasons and factors that affect their school decisions declared by them, such as “success”, or their expressions such as “good school”, are ambiguous and have different meanings for different parents. Subjective meanings they attributed to schools or neighbourhoods are constitutive of their practices and the internal dynamics of the schools that differentiate them from other public schools. Thus, understanding the subjective meanings, agents’ interpretations are essential component of the research. 2) Parents’ actions and decisions are generated in relation to the structural inequalities of education system. Therefore, although the research focuses on the decisions and the practices of the agents within the schools, the thesis intends to place them in institutional, social and geographical context, as stated above.

In that sense, the research question, how these schools become popular distinguishing among other public schools, led me to focus on revealing the interplay between the structural inequalities and actions of the agents, considering the subjective meaning they attribute to the schools. This indicates that the research should not be limited with listing the factors which affect the decision of the agents from a positivist perspective and also should not be content with solely understanding the subjective meaning. This is why positivism and interpretivism are not appropriate methodological approaches for the research. At this point, critical

realism's emphasis on getting beyond the observable reality, and giving place to the subjective meaning makes up for these shortcomings since, in the simplest sense, it searches for structures and mechanisms that generate the empirical reality while does not exclude the subjective meaning. While acknowledging critical realism's point to establish relationship between structure and agency in social research, I propose that Bourdieu's methodological understanding in his field theory which constitutes the theoretical framework of the thesis, provides a more adequate approach to the relationship between structure and agency. Although his ontological understanding of structure is different from that of critical realism (Vandenberghe, 1999), epistemologically, Bourdieu's field theory allowing structure to be read through agency and subjective meaning, allows me to focus more on the relationality between the two.

According to Bourdieu, structural necessity and individual agency, subjectivism and objectivism are "false antinomies" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 10), since they reinforce each other. Against the opposition of structure and agency, Bourdieu asserts that both are the essential components of the full reality. Both subjectivist and objectivist accounts hinder to reach full reality. Objectivist point of view by treating structures as autonomous, ignores the agents' experience of structures, and regards agents as passive bearers of structural forces. Subjective point of view on the other hand, by treating reality as a contingent result of actions and decisions of conscious individuals, has a risk not to grasp and explain the resilience of structures, also the objective forces challenged or reproduced by the actions of agents (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 8-10).

Against these risks both subjectivist and objectivist approaches have, he suggests articulation of subjective and objective approaches dialectically. This articulation highlights a double reading of reality. According to Bourdieu, society is a "bidimensional system of relations of power and relations of meaning between groups and classes" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 7). Thus, a science of society has to account both dimensions through a "double reading of reality" which refer to an analysis consist of subjective and objective explanations.

The most resolutely objectivist theory has to integrate the agents' representation of the social world; more precisely, it must take account of the contribution that agents make towards constructing the view of the social world, and through this, towards constructing this world, by means of the work of representation (in all senses of the word) that they constantly perform in order to impose their view of the world or the view of their own position in this world their social identity (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 727).

Double reality is based on the presence of social structures in two constitutive ways; through the distribution of resources and through the mental schemata of the agents that “function as symbolic templates for the practical activities-conduct, thoughts, feelings, and judgements-of social agents” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 7). This means first, social structures are not external to the agents but structure their actions from inside through perceptions, and second, rather than being material things, social structures refer to social relations.

The emphasis on relations is at the core of the methodological stance of Bourdieu. He does not give ontological priority to either structure or agent, but emphasizes on the primacy of relations. Here, with reference to Wacquant (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 11), it should be stated that “objective account has priority over the subjective understanding epistemologically” in his double reading of social reality. His concepts of field and habitus are the products of his relational methodology.

A field consists of a set of objective, historical relations between the positions anchored in certain forms of power (or capital), while habitus consists of a set of historical relations “deposited” within individual bodies in the form of mental and corporeal schemata of perception, appreciation, and action (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 16)

The dialectic relationship between habitus and field implies that social agents are products of neither social structures external to them nor internal reasoning, but they are the products of individual and collective history. Similarly, actions and decisions of the agents generated by habitus in relation to the particular fields are conditioned socially and economically. They must be understood in relation to the objective structure of the field.

The social world is, to a large extent, what the agents make of it, at each moment; but they have no chance of un-making and re-making it except on the basis of realistic knowledge of what it is and what they can do with it from the position they occupy within it (Bourdieu 1985, p. 734).

The concept of field allows for domain specific understanding of structure, and agency specific action. In that sense, agency and structure cease to be abstract categories. Here, I state that spatial context should be integrated to the structure in order to concretize the structure and agency, and the domain specific understanding of structure and emphasis on relations allow this integration. The axis that connects objective structure of field and space can be grasped in Bourdieu's statements below:

A group's chances of appropriating any given class of rare assets depend partly on its capacity for the specific appropriation, defined by economic, cultural, social capital it can deploy in order to appropriate materially or symbolically the assets in question, that is, its position in social space, and partly on the relationship between its distribution in geographical space and the distribution of the scarce assets in that space. ... In other words, a group's real social distance from certain assets must integrate the geographical distance, which itself depends on the group's spatial distribution and, more precisely, its distribution with respect to the "focal point" of economic and cultural values... (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 124).

Integration of geographical space and social space brings us closer to a more context specific account of structure¹. The dialectic relationship between structure and agency suggested by field theory, together with the proposal to integrate social space and geographical space allows to develop a more concrete approach to structure that is sensitive to both spatial context and subjective meaning.

My special attention to the relationship between spatial context and structure stems from the fact that phenomenon of popular schools is the expression of the interplay between the agents' actions, and structural inequalities; the actions of the agents create educational inequalities in the context of school differentiation, but their

¹ This can also be found in Jessop's strategic-relational approach to the relationship between structure and agency. He proposes a dialectic relationship between the two emphasizing on the selectivity of structures and capability of agents, and temporal and spatial context is inherent in the selectivity of structures, since "structural constraints are always temporally, spatially, agency- and strategy-specific" (Jessop, 1996, p. 124).

actions generated in relation to the structural inequalities that have a strong spatial, also institutional basis. In that sense, spatial context is inherent to the objective structure that generate popular schools, also it is inherent to the actions of the agents through subjective meaning. In order to answer the research question (how some public schools differentiate among others and become popular?), the research intends to reveal this interplay between the structural inequalities and actions of the agents. In order to explore how geography conditions the actions of the agents, how the structural mechanisms generate action in a spatially specific way, the research relies on comparative case study.

1.1.1. Research design

Bourdieu's field theory and his reproductionist approach to the relationship between education and social inequalities, inform me to consider the institutional context when focusing on the actors. While I concentrated on school for the research contextualizing it institutionally, focused on the school principals, deputy principals and teachers as the actors of supply side, and parents as the actors of demand side of education. Since Bourdieu's emphasis on relations which is at the core of his methodological stance, leads social relations to be placed at the center of analysis, while investigating the actors, their actions and perceptions, I focused on the relationships between them. While the analysis of the relationship between principals and parents led me to regard school principals as "gate keepers" as the actors who hold a significant control over parents' access to schools, the relationship between the parents led me to focus on their strategies on the basis of their attempts to distinguish themselves from their counterparts. As the context specific account of structure informs that actions and strategies differ according to institutional and geographical context, I designed the research as multiple (two) case study. My intent to employ multiple (two) case study design is both to illustrate formation of popular schools, and to compare geographical contexts in order to find out how this formation is realized in a spatially specific way (that led me to emphasize on the spatio-institutional dimension of educational inequalities). Thus, commonalities are as significant as differences in the analysis.

As I detected its deficiency in the literature on spatiality of educational inequalities, I considered the geographical distribution of supply (educational investments) side inequalities along with demand (social composition) side inequalities in defining the geographical contexts. Accordingly, for case (school) selection, considering the distribution of public educational investments and distribution of social composition by the districts of Ankara, I selected two districts (Çankaya and Keçiören). Then, I defined one school in each district after my visit to the Provincial Directorate of National Education in Ankara. These schools are called “popular schools” in the thesis. Popularity was measured on the basis of the rate of enrolled students living out of the schools’ jurisdictional areas, also their success in high school entrance examination was considered. On the other hand, the reason of the focus on public schools empirically is that geographical distribution of private schools is more responsive to the demand, so they do not offer an appropriate case to explore asserted spatial mismatch between the supply and demand of education in Turkey. Due to the fact that primary school choices of families are teacher-oriented, it is hard to see the dynamics of school differentiation other than teachers through primary schools. For these reasons, the focus is on the popular public middle schools.

1.1.2. Data collection and analysis

For data collection, I benefited from the statistics provided by the Ministry of National Education and Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education, especially for the collection of geographical data in order to select the districts. Firstly, with the rationale of providing a general evaluation on the adequacy of public educational supply against the demand for quality education in Ankara, I benefitted from the last ten years’ statistics on the number of public and private schools in Ankara. Secondly, I used the district statistics on public and private middle school numbers with the rationale of evaluating the distribution of demand for quality education province-wide, and detecting the districts where the demand for quality education is concentrated in Ankara. Thirdly, I benefitted from the district statistics on public education; school, classroom, teacher, student numbers at lower-secondary education level with the rationale of revealing the province-wide distribution of adequacy of public educational supply against the demand for quality education.

For the district selection and then school selection, I employed purposeful sampling strategy, which means selection with a purpose of obtaining information about the phenomenon in the study and research problem of the study (Creswell, 2013). As stated, school service buses signifying parents' attempts to access better quality education indicate spatial mismatch between educational supply and demand. School A and School B were selected because they are the public middle schools where school service buses are heavily directed, so they are the schools which have a significant number of parents who attempt to access better quality education. School A and School B were selected with a purpose to develop understanding of these attempts of the parents. Çankaya and Keçiören on the other hand, are selected to contextualize the parents' actions geographically based on the purpose of exploring the effect of spatial inequalities regarding the distribution of educational supply on the parents' actions. As I will detail later in Chapter 4, while Çankaya was selected as the district where public educational supply is consistent with demand, Keçiören was selected as the district where public educational supply is inconsistent with demand for better quality education. The participants were also purposefully sampled; I selected participants according to grouping of the actors I made in line with my aim to include educational supply and demand equally in the analysis.

Since my purpose in employing qualitative case study design was to understand and explore the cases and interpretations of the actors, I collected data through observation and semi-structured in-depth interviews. In line with my research question and methodological approach, I observed participants, their interactions, and conversations in School A and School B. Data collection through observation was mainly based on my participation in the parent-teacher meetings held in School A and School B in December, 2019 and in teachers' rooms in both schools during my field study as an observer. As a "nonparticipant/observer as participant", I watched and took notes as an outsider without directly involving with activity (parent-teacher meetings), and people (teachers) in the teachers' room (Creswell, 2013, p. 167).

Another qualitative method used for data collection was interviewing. I conducted semi-structured interviews in both schools. Firstly, with a purpose of familiarizing myself to the subject, defining the research question clearly, also developing the interview questions, I visited the schools and conducted pilot interviews with the principals, deputy principals, parents, teachers, also school bus drivers in November 2019. After I attained a certain level of familiarity, defined my research question and developed questions to be asked to the interviewees, I made regular and frequent visits to the schools in two periods in two-year time frame.

From December, 2019 to December 2021, I conducted 24 interviews (with principal, deputy principal, teachers (13), and parents (9)) in School A in Çankaya, and 35 interviews (with principal, deputy principals (3), teachers (11), and parents (20)) in School B in Keçiören in two rounds. The first round of interviews was conducted between December 2019 and March 2020, and the second round of interviews was conducted between September and December 2021. In the period between these two rounds of interviews, which was determined depending on the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, I focused more on the review of the related literature and theoretical framework of the study. Although I saw this unplanned break as an interruption to the data collection process that would limit the research, data collection process spanning a longer time frame provided an opportunity for both the maturation of the study and the inclusiveness of the analysis. I had a chance to see the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, which had a great impact especially in the field of education, through these two schools, also to enrich the analysis by collecting data about what the schools faced in this process that spanned about one and a half year.

In accordance with my intent to reveal the interplay between the structural inequalities and actions of the agents, I employed a two layered geographical framework to the educational inequalities; province-wide and district-wide, for both analysis and the presentation of the data. While province-wide educational inequalities refer to the uneven geographical distribution of educational investments among the districts of Ankara, district-wide educational inequalities refer to the retranslation of distributional inequalities province-wide, among the districts, into the school differentiation by the practices of the agents. I analyzed and presented the first

layer (province-wide) of educational inequalities through tables and maps (in Chapter 4). This analysis was also used for the district selection. I also analyzed and presented uneven geographical distribution of educational demand (social composition), regarding socio-economic status and educational level, district-wide (in Çankaya and Keçiören), since I realized after the pilot interviews that the socio-spatial segregation patterns within these two districts, especially in Keçiören, are effective for example on motivations of the parents in deciding or rejecting schools, so it is significant for the examination and comparison between the dynamics that differentiate the schools from other public schools.

After the transcription of all interviews the steps followed for the analysis of data gathered through the interviews are coding, sorting, achieving local and then inclusive integration based on issue-focused analysis which deals with issues learned from all the respondents, rather than dealing with each respondent's cases separately (Weiss, 1995). I firstly, connected the interviewees' accounts to the concepts that appeared in the transcripts (coding), then sorted the material into topics and sub-topics, then interpreted the material of each topic (local integration) and organized them into a coherent order (inclusive integration), and then I compared and integrated the two cases. In presentation of the cases, I used both overall cross-case analysis and separate discussions on each case for similarities and differences between the cases (Cresswell, 2013) and presented them within the theoretical framework of field theory. I also used selected quotations from the data derived from the interviews to discuss and interpret the topics and sub-topics in reporting.

1.1.3. Validity

An important contribution of the frequent use of quotations is connected to the validity of the study. Although there are different perspectives on the meaning of the term and how it is established in qualitative research, it is generally accepted that it should be handled differently than in the quantitative studies (Creswell, 2013). Little meaning of traditional understanding of validity and reliability in qualitative studies especially due to the centrality of interpretations of the researcher, does not diminish the importance of it in qualitative studies. Validation in qualitative research can be

regarded as “an attempt to assess accuracy of the findings” (Creswell, 2013, p. 249) that refers to process differently from the verification of the results.

Interpretations reached in qualitative study is a product of interactions between the researcher and the participants, and the report is a product of the researcher who is first of all an interpreter (Creswell, 2013). However, there are several strategies/methods serve to the validity of qualitative studies. One of them is using multiple sources of data to support the evidences (triangulation). In that sense, I paid special attention to include different perspectives; especially the comparison between the different actor groups' accounts on the same topics reserved an important place in the analysis.

Moreover, as qualitative study is a co-product of the researcher and the participants, in order to ensure the transferability of the findings between the researcher and the participants, “thick descriptions” is crucial for the readers to evaluate on the transferability of the findings. In that sense, I used quotations, descriptions of the activities within the schools etc., which are expected to provide detail and contribute to the validity or trustworthiness of the study. These also provide readers to evaluate the transferability of the findings to other contexts.

Since my focus is on differentiation and particular “type” of schools, the findings of the research cannot be transferred to all school contexts. However, in line with my theoretical framework, my investigation on the two schools and findings are presented in relation to other schools, so it can give a general idea about the public middle schools in Ankara. On the other hand, since my research relies on the idea that school differentiation is an urban phenomenon, the thesis cannot explain the schools in rural areas. The case study involves the analyzes of educational investments in Ankara and in the districts, also analyzes of socio-economic status and educational level in Çankaya and Keçiören in order to contextualize the two cases geographically. Although this gives a general idea about the districts regarding public school quality or sufficiency at lower-secondary education level, the cases cannot be generalized to all public middle schools in Çankaya and Keçiören since as

I stated, they represent particular “type” of schools. The findings of the study are transferable to explain similar public middle schools which receive high demand out of their enrolment area in Çankaya and Keçiören.

1.2. Analytical framework

As the interplay between the actors’ actions and structural inequalities in the formation of popular schools, and its strong spatial basis that directs me to contextualize it institutionally and geographically indicates, public school differentiation is a multi-dimensional and multi-layered process. In order to reveal this, I offer a multi-level approach including individual, school, and policy levels with a spatial perspective for the analysis. The analytical framework I offer to reveal the relationality between these levels is provided by connecting the concepts of exclusion, access and socio-spatial closure.

Firstly, my focus on the parents’ school decisions and motivations uncovers the relationality of their decisions on the basis of their seek for exclusivity with social considerations. Exclusion is the key term to conceptualize this relationality, since their search for exclusivity excludes the ones in less powerful positions. Exclusion also refers to the unequal educational structure regarding uneven distribution of resources, and it allows us to consider the structural inequalities while investigating the practices of the actors. In that sense, it connects educational supply and demand, and allows me to claim that educational inequalities in the context of school differentiation do not only arise from the relational actions among the parents, but also in their relations with educational policies and institutions that structure the educational field unequally. In that sense, the education system ceases to be external to the social inequalities in education, which are mostly analyzed in the related literature at individual level, as the consequences of school choices of parents that vary according to their social class positions.

Regarding the uneven geographical distribution of educational resources and agents, it is claimed that school differentiation should be contextualized geographically. The key concept here is access, which connects the spatiality of structural inequalities in

terms of uneven geographical distribution of educational supply and demand, and the strategies and practices of the agents, and adds spatial dimension to exclusion. In that sense, spatial inequalities in education led by the state and its policies are also included, and the spatiality of educational inequalities, which is mostly approached in the context of geographical distribution of different social classes in the related literature ceased to be reflection of existing socio-spatial segregation.

The concept reached by the inclusion of supply-side of education in both exclusion and access regarding the distribution of educational resources is socio-spatial closure. The concept of social closure refers to the creation of social inequalities through the competitive actions of the agents for access to resources excluding the ones in less powerful positions than themselves. The concept of socio-spatial closure is developed on the basis of the relationality of the actions of the agents with the structural inequalities of the field, also spatiality of the exclusionary strategies of the agents and structural inequalities. Thus, with the concept of socio-spatial closure, I intend to explain the competitive actions of the agents to access educational resources which are unevenly distributed over city space, excluding the ones in subordinate positions socio-spatially.

1.3. Structure of the thesis

The following chapter, Chapter 2, introduces the theoretical and conceptual framework of the thesis with the help of review of the related literature on school choice and educational inequalities. Firstly, why the emphasis on the demand side of education is insufficient for this study and why the supply side of education in terms of educational policies and schools should be included in the research is discussed. Secondly, why school differentiation should be contextualized geographically, and how geography matters for the creation of educational inequalities will be revealed. Bourdieu's field theory and his insights on the relationship between physical space and social space will be introduced as the theoretical framework of the study that is operationalized through regarding schooling as an organizational field and each school as sub-field.

In line with the aim of the thesis to include the policy level in the examination of educational inequalities, Chapter 3 firstly discusses the problem of limited resources allocated to education by the state and competition generated by this, with the consequences of school selectivity and hierarchy in the education system in Turkey. Secondly, schools are placed as the organizations of educational service delivery within institutional context on the basis of their autonomy in implementation of education policies and school finance. Thirdly, spatial inequalities in the educational system in Turkey in the context of uneven distribution of educational services (supply-side differences), and residential address-based school placement system will be discussed.

Chapter 4 intends to reveal the spatial context of the research before the discussion on the findings in the following chapter. In that sense, firstly, the province-wide distribution of public educational investments is examined with the aim of revealing the uneven geographical distribution of educational supply. This forms the first layer of geographical framework offered for the examination of educational inequalities in the thesis. Then, the second layer, district-wide educational inequalities are revealed in the context of uneven distribution of educational investments and social composition district-wide. Since the understanding of two-layered geographical inequalities also includes the strategy of case selection, selected cases and logic of comparison are also provided here. Lastly, the selected two schools are presented in terms of their position in educational and geographical sense.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings of the field research within the theoretical framework of field. After revealing the objective structure of the field of schooling in Ankara, the internal dynamics of the schools generated by the strategies and practices of the actors in relation to the structural inequalities are discussed comparatively. Although both schools are formed as socio-spatial closures, how the spatio-institutional dynamics that form the schools as socio-spatial closures and their geographical scale vary according to their geographical position is revealed.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SPATIO- INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION TO EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITIES

This chapter intends to introduce the conceptual and theoretical framework of the thesis in dialogue with the related literature and findings of the field research. The main argument of the thesis is that educational inequalities in the context of differentiation among the public schools are neither merely produced by the actions of service-receiving actors, nor simply result from the state policies and education system, but produced at school level by the actors of both demand and supply side of education through their reciprocally adopted strategies and practices in relation to the inequalities led by the state and its policies. Suggesting interplay between the strategies of the actors of supply and demand sides of education who meet at the schools, and accordingly focusing on the schools as the organizations of educational service delivery allows me to comprehend both system level inequalities led by the state and education policies and individual level, strategies and practices of the agents that create further inequalities in relation to those inequalities.

The thesis also argues that space is a constituent element in the production of educational inequalities; it is inherent both to the structural inequalities led by the state and to the strategies of the agents. The popular public schools express that the inequalities led by the state and educational policies take a diverse form within schools through the intertwining of institutional and spatial contexts. Therefore, the thesis introduces spatio-institutional dimension to educational inequalities.

To reveal this argument, I aim to discuss firstly the role of agents, specifically the middle-class parents, in creating educational inequalities through their school choices and actions, and how their schooling decisions are based on exclusion of lower

classes and can be regarded as social closure. It will be claimed that rather than choice, exclusion is the key term to conceptualize the relationship between the agents' schooling practices and educational inequalities.

Secondly, I aim to draw attention to the supply side of education by discussing the role of educational policies and schools in creation of inequalities. The claim proposed here is that exclusion is not only searched in the relational actions between the parents but also in their relations with educational policies and institutions that necessitates to include the policy level and school level in the explanation of educational inequalities.

Thirdly, I intend to discuss spatiality of educational inequalities and how spatial dimension of educational inequalities should be conceptualized, and reveal that space has a constitutive role in the creation of educational inequalities which is inherent both to the structural aspects and the agents' practices and perceptions. The claim here is that spatiality of educational inequalities does not only arise from the residential segregation in static terms, but also from the spatial accessibility dynamics. In that sense, another key concept introduced here is access, which adds a spatial dimension to exclusion and social closure.

Building on these claims, I will propose the theoretical framework, and where the key concepts are placed in this framework in the last section. My consideration of redressing the balance between the supply and demand sides of education, and revealing the interplay between the structural inequalities, and the actions of the agents driven by their perceptions, lead me to employ Bourdieu's field theory and to treat schooling as a field and each school as sub-fields with an emphasis on space in formation of fields benefitting again from Bourdieu, his approach to the relationship between physical space and social space.

Educational inequalities and more specifically, differentiation in schooling practices of families is explained with variety of factors in the related literature. Although actor-based explanations which focus on the actions of families in relation to their social class positions are dominant, some studies locate educational practices of the

parents in a broader context, referring neoliberalization, marketization of education etc., and some studies consider educational policies that frame the practices of the actors.

Assertion of spatio-institutional dimension to educational inequalities on the other hand, is based on the fact that school differentiation led by the schooling practices of the parents that differ according to their social class positions is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, and requires a multi-level approach that includes policy, school and individual levels in the analysis, and spatial dimension cuts through all these levels. Explanation to educational inequalities within the theoretical framework of field provides to focus on the actions and strategies of the agents in the schools in relation to those levels, and how the schools as fields are formed as socio-spatial closures, since the social closure strategies of the agents are realized through space in relation to the existing spatial inequalities in education.

Five factors that different studies relied upon and highlighted among others in their analysis can be identified in the literature: (1) Actors' social class positions; educational inequalities are explained mainly with reference to the educational practices that differ according to social class positions, and the focus is on the actions of families (2) Institutional factors; some studies emphasize on the role of educational institutions, especially the schools and school principals in facilitating inequalities. (3) Policy context; educational policies of countries are considered as enabling or constraining factors for the differentiation of educational practices, more specifically, characteristics of school placement systems, the availability of school choice options and opportunities for the families, availability of private education, and educational policy changes and reforms are considered in this sense. (4) Macro processes; political economy of education, neoliberal transformations and marketization of education etc. are referred factors by some studies that place educational practices of families in a broader context. (5) Spatial factors; some studies discuss local characteristics of educational services; social, ethnic and racial composition of schools, neighbourhoods and cities etc. while examining differentiation of educational practices.

These factors are mainly analyzed in the context of school choice, one of the most studied themes regarding the differentiation of educational practices. School choice, although refers to a particular schooling policy, for a great body of literature that deals with the parents' agency, it is a departure point of the discussions on differentiated schooling decisions and practices of families. Thus, the studies can be divided into two main groups according to their focus on supply or demand side of choice in their explanations to educational inequalities. While educational policies and more specifically the availability of school choice options, also the characteristics of institutional structure form the basis of supply side-based explanations; the schooling decisions of parents, their values, perceptions, etc. in relation to their social class positions are the basis of demand side-based explanations. In this sense, the factors listed above are discussed in two sections within the framework of this division, discussion on the spatial factors on the other hand, forms a separate section because it cuts across supply and demand side-based approaches. After discussing these factors, the last section of the chapter aims to reveal the conceptual and theoretical framework of the thesis in detail.

My discussion order developed with the help of literature review brings me to the theoretical conceptualization of school as field. With reference to Bourdieu, I focus on the school decisions and motivations of the parents which lead me to investigate school choice as a bottom-up process firstly (2.1). The fact that the school decisions of the parents motivated by distinguishing themselves from other parents with mainly social considerations, allows us to regard their school decisions as exclusionary strategies. This uncovers the relationality of schooling practices of the different classes and brings us to the formation of field regarding the creation of educational inequalities through the relational actions of different classes (discussed in 2.1.1). Since the basis of the Bourdieu's approach to inequalities is uneven distribution of resources, considering its significant role in distributing the educational resources, I focus on the state and its policies investigating school choice as a policy question (2.2). In that sense, the relationality in the field is not only seen between the parents, but also between the parents and institutional context of education. This, which leads me to consider the supply and demand sides of education mutually for the examination of inequalities, at the same time causes me to

focus on the school principals and teachers as the supply side actors, thus investigating the relationship between them and the parents, placing the schools in institutional context. Since Bourdieu's proposal to integrate geographical space and social space which I regard to develop a more context specific account of structure, requires to consider the geographical distribution of agents with respect to the geographical distribution of resources, I need to focus on both the geographical distribution of parents and geographical distribution of educational resources in relation to each other. In that sense, contextualization of field geographically is based on investigation of spatial inequalities of both educational supply and demand as I will reveal with the discussion on the spatiality of educational inequalities (2.3).

2.1. Social class and education: School choice as a bottom-up process

Social class-based differences in educational opportunities and outcomes is a well-established issue in the related literature. On the basis of the studies in the related literature, how social class position is connected to the creation of educational inequalities can be divided into two; one is its role in creation of inequalities regarding academic success/achievement through the social background of families, and two is its effect on the educational choices (Hatcher, 2006). While acknowledging that these two are not independent, the focus here is on the relationship between social class and school choice made by the parents in line with the problematic of the thesis.

Especially after the 1980s, with neoliberal education policies spreading in most of the countries, manifested in the form of parental choice, performance league tables, parentocracy and competition among schools etc., the issue of school choice becomes a common subject of study to show the class-based differentiation of educational practices of families. There is an extensive body of literature, especially in the UK, demonstrating that increase in school choice provides advantage to the ones who already in a privileged position, the middle classes in particular, while deteriorates the educational conditions of the working class children (Ball, 1993, 2006; Lynch & Moran, 2006). Whether school choice increases social segregation among the schools is an important line of discussion in the literature, and despite few

opposing views (Gorard & Fitz, 2000), the common argument is that school choice reproduces already existing inequalities by increasing social segregation among schools. However, this conclusion is reached mainly by comparing segregation levels of before and after the policy changes which increases school choice opportunities for parents, but how social segregation among the schools is produced is mainly explained by the parents' agency. Most of the studies, whether mention to the educational policies in terms of restricting or enabling the practices of families or not, focus on the differentiated schooling practices of different classes that not only reflect but also reproduce and perpetuate educational inequalities. Here, actions of families, their schooling decisions have a causal power to explain educational inequalities, and practices of the middle class parents are attributed a pivotal role. There is a kind of agreement on the differentiated school choice opportunities and practices of different classes, and the privileged position of middle classes in educational field. The divergence point is how different educational practices or choices of different class groups are explained.

2.1.1. Middle classes, parents' agency and educational inequalities

In a review of school choice research Hatcher identifies two distinct approaches in the explanation of class differences in educational choices; one is based on rational action theory, regards parents as utility maximizers whose decisions and school choices are based on their cost and benefit calculations, and sees class-based differentiation of educational choices and practices as a result of different evaluations made by the actors according to their different class positions. The other approach on the other hand, is based on culturalist view in which class-based differences in educational practices and choices are explained by "unconscious cultural processes" (Hatcher, 2006). In the first approach, which sees education as an investment good, class differences in educational choices arise from the fact that the costs and benefits of investing in education differ according to the class positions. The second approach's culturalist explanations relying on Bourdieu's "practical sense" and habitus, reject rational action theory's individualism in methodological sense and sees actions of the agents arising from the unconscious processes. With an

emphasis on the agents' identity, which is regarded as a historical product, in determining the actions and decisions of the agents, the significance of values and meanings that effect the choices of the agents is highlighted.

On the other hand, there is a great number of studies in between position demonstrating that school choice is a much more complex process including dynamics both rational and "outside the rational". For example, Ball declares his position between the one which "sees social actors as essentially strategic and consciously hyper-rational" and the other "conjuring up an actor who is spoken by a practical and natural logic of necessity" (2003, p. 17). He demonstrates the togetherness of calculations and cultural processes behind the school decisions of parents. Considering the values and meanings, he argues that the middle classes in his study are not isolated consumers whose choices result from calculations, but are the ones whose individualism is mediated through collective social processes; collectively produced memories and future expectations (Ball, 2003).

Ball and his colleagues in another study argue that "choice in education is systematically related to social class differences and the reproduction of class inequalities" (Ball et al., 1996, p. 89), challenging the view that choice is neutral and individual. They present three ideal-types of school chooser according to "inclination to choose", "capacity to engage with choice", and "principles, aspirations, desires"; the privileged/skilled, the semi-skilled, and the disconnected. These ideal-types, although it is stated that "there is no absolute relationship between choice and social class" (Ball & Gewirtz, 1997, p. 580) correspond with particular class groups; while the "disconnected choosers" are working class, the "privileged/skilled choosers" are professional middle-class, and the "semi-skilled choosers" are from different class positions. The "privileged/skilled choosers" are dispositioned to choose school and have high capacity to engage with the education system, and their choices are objective/goal-oriented based on mostly academic concerns. The "semi-skilled choosers" are also dispositioned to choose, but their capacity in order to benefit from the education system is lower, and they are dependent on others while evaluating schools. The "disconnected choosers", on the other hand, are unfamiliar with the education system and schools, and the most significant factor which effect their

choices is physical distance. They choose with the “logic of necessity”. In the study, they emphasize the importance of capitals in Bourdieusian sense, in differentiation of school choice practices, but what is also underlined is the different values, meanings etc. attributed to school choice by these groups. What differentiates their school choices is not simply the calculations of economic gain, but different values and meanings attributed to choice and schools, and their different capacities to evaluate the schools and education system.

Values and meanings attributed to education and schools by the parents, and their perceptions are generally referred sources to challenge the presentation of parents as rational, conscious calculators. For example, Bosetti (2007) who focuses on how parents choose argues that school decisions of parents are based upon “complex rationalities” rather than resulting from the simple calculations of economic gain. He finds out that parental decisions on schooling are based on “personal values, subjective desired goals of education, as well as others within their social networks and professional networks to collect information” (p. 388). The portrayal of parents as knowledgeable and conscious individual actors about the options, having clear preferences and values is challenged, and inequality among different groups of parents in their access to information about the school options is underlined.

The studies which take a position between the two opposing views of rational action and cultural processes in their explanations on the social class-based differentiation in school choice, do not completely exclude or reject rational calculations, but they emphasize on the richness and complexity of action by including subjective meanings and values. These studies actually show how rationality or possibility of calculation in the choices/decisions is dependent on the class positions of parents. Moreover, values, perceptions, meanings and priorities vary according to the social class position of the parents. For example, competitive and skilled middle class, and less skilled working class parents who are unfamiliar with the operation of the education system and institutions that can be found in ideal types of Ball, express a common view in these studies. For example, his privileged/skilled choosers correspond with “high interveners”, and working-class “disconnected choosers” are referred as “low interveners” in Vincent’s (2001) study. Thus, the underlying

inference from the literature is that while the choices of middle classes are close to be made with conscious calculations, working classes' decisions rely heavily on necessities.

This is criticized for idealizing middle-classes as the main actors of school choice while identifying working class parents with inferiority by some scholars. For example, some studies which accept the class-based differentiation of educational practices and decisions, but oppose to the presentation of middle classes as ideal choosers, challenge this either by arguing that schooling decisions of working class parents also have rationality (Warrington, 2005), or middle class choice is not purely rational and individualistic (Raveaud & van Zanten, 2006). To demonstrate the diversities within middle classes is another way to this end. For example, Irwin and Elley (2011) find out different meanings, values and motivations among middle class parents, they illustrate; “anxiety about facilitating a good future for their children is a *particular*, rather than *general*, account of middle-class parenting experiences” (p. 492). They criticize the tendency towards overemphasis on the homogeneity of middle class experience in the literature. Working class experience is also heterogenous in education. Here, Paul Willis's study, named “Learning to Labour” should be specifically mentioned (Willis, 1977). In his study Willis focuses on a particular group of working class kids, and their failure in education. He strikingly reveals the role of collective culture through which they resist to the dominant values of school. Rather than unconscious processes, counter or alternative culture as a means of opposing to the school authority refers to the working class kids' conscious actions, and active involvement in educational processes.

To sum, the related literature demonstrates that rational action theory is insufficient regarding its narrow understanding of action that ignores modalities of action other than conscious act. Studies show that social class position is not only related with the balance between cost and benefits of investing in education as assumed by rational action theory, but also conditions access to information about the options that is necessary for the calculations of costs and benefits. Thus, the parents are not clearly and completely informed and knowledgeable agents who calculate cost and benefits constantly, but their rationality depends on their class positions.

Although it accepts the social class-based differences in education, the deficiency in rational action theory in explaining the social class differences in educational choices mainly stems from its understanding of agent unconditioned socially and economically that is the main point Bourdieu makes in opposing the rational action theory's understanding of action (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). With reference to Hatcher (2006), a comprehensive approach to agency in educational inequalities should consider the culturalist approach's strengths without excluding the possibility of rational decision, the combination of these two on the other hand, is a matter of empirical research.

As the research on the popular schools will show, the decisions of the parents are conditioned structurally. Moreover, the difference between the two groups of families regarding how they decide, demonstrates that geographical position, where they locate with respect to the educational services available and other agents is also crucial. Their geographical position is an important factor that differentiates their schooling decisions. In that sense, the research confirms that the decisions of the parents cannot be fully understood with isolation from the social and economic conditions, but further demonstrates that their decisions are also conditioned geographically. The difference between the two groups of middle-class parents, whose social positions are close, regarding how they decide shows that geographical position is crucial for the intra-class differentiation in the schooling field.

These parents by rejecting neighbourhood schools diverge from their counterparts and it is hard to say that their decisions are driven by "unconscious cultural processes", but at the same time, they are not isolated from the others while deciding on schools. They confirm Bosetti in the sense that their social networks to access information is crucial in their decisions, and as Ball states, their individualism in decisions mediated through collective processes, but more significantly, through the institutional and geographical context of education which is mostly overlooked in the related literature that mainly deals how parents decide on schooling, but does not question parents' decisions as the main factors that create educational inequalities.

In other words, whether stems from cultural processes or rational calculations, choices and actions of parents that differentiate according to social class positions are the main sources of educational inequalities. Choices not only reflect but also reproduce social class-based inequalities in education, and in this sense, there is an overemphasis on the parents' agency. This is also seen in the studies that approach school choice as a social process and underline the relationality of different classes' educational practices and choices, but these studies are significant in the sense that they show how middle classes' school choices and schooling practices become exclusionary towards the ones in less powerful social positions than themselves.

2.1.2. From choice to exclusion

As the field research on two popular schools in Ankara will indicate, the parents consider the social composition of the schools, and their perceptions about the other parents are influential in their decisions, also the information they gather about the schools is highly dependent and limited to their social networks. This confirms that the parents are not isolated and completely knowledgeable agents as assumed by the rational action theory. Their considerations of social composition and more specifically the social diversity in the schools and neighbourhoods in their decisions indicate that their practices are not neutral to social inequalities, but operate with the logic of social closure excluding the parents and students who are deprived of resources. This indicates that school choice is relational and it is a social process.

There is an important strand of literature that demonstrates the social and relational character of parents' school choices. Although educational inequalities are mainly explained by exclusionary schooling decisions of parents, so there is an overemphasis on the parents' agency in these studies, as well, they significantly reveal the social and relational aspects of parents' decisions and question the meaning of choice. Ball (2003) for example, in his study, links the individual actions of middle-class parents to collective impacts with the concept of closure. School choices of middle-class parents are revealed as "strategies of social closure" since their choices based on the rationale of group making by excluding the "others", the lower classes. Their choices are driven by sense of belonging which makes choices

“irreducible to a simple calculability” (2003, p. 162). Bourdieu’s habitus, disposition, and practical sense are the applied concepts to explain the aspects which are “outside the rational” in school choice.

Approach to school choice as a social process is a common aspect of the studies which emphasize the role of values and perceptions of the parents. Cucchiara and Horvat (2013) for example, challenge rational action theory and its understanding of choice by arguing that choosing a school can become “a means of expressing and enacting a particular identity” for parents (p. 487). Relying on the sociological studies on consumption, school choice is examined as an “act of consumption”, accordingly as a means to express and construct identity in the study. They show that choosing a school is an important way for some parents to define who they are and who they are not, and can become distinguishing among the parents. They assert that choosing a school is mainly a social process with meanings and has a highly symbolic character. As claimed, when they choose, middle-classes consider not only the educational quality of schools in objective sense, but also social environment and social composition regarding class, race, ethnicity etc.

Interactive and relational character of school choice, more explicitly, relationality of schooling practices and decisions of different classes is emphasized by most of the studies which consider school choice as a social process. They show that school choice rather than being expression of individual preferences, operates relationally among the different class groups based on exclusion of particular groups of parents. In that sense, the studies emphasize on the relational character of exclusion in the school choices of parents. For example, Holme (2002) finds out that social factors such as social class and race are influential in the decisions of parents, indeed parents associate quality of schools with the social composition of parents, more clearly, the status of the parents the schools serve.

Studies show that middle classes strategically engage with education, and education is a crucial field for middle-class formation and to maintain/reproduce their positions (Conway, 1997; Butler & Robson, 2001, 2010). Although there are class fractional differences, and social diversity is valued by some middle-class groups for its

“educative potential” (Reay et al., 2011), what is identified with middle-class parents is their “seek for lack of diversity and tolerable level of social mix in the learning environment of their children” in order to fulfil their expectations and guarantee the privileged position for their children (van Zanten, 2003). In other words, what they seek has a dual character; to be with “people like them” and to avoid “people not like them” (see, Ball, 2003). To this end, they develop different strategies. Choosing private school and exit from the public education system is one of them and the most effective way to their aim, eliminating the social diversity in order to “secure the learning environment of their children” (van Zanten, 2003). As Ball asserts, “the private school provides a definitive form of boundary maintenance, of closure... It is a choice for exclusivity and also for advantage” (Ball, 2003, p. 160). On the other hand, middle-class parents who stay in the public education system and choose public school, develop strategies in order to reduce interaction with others in less powerful position as much as possible, “colonizing and creation of niches within the public education system” (Moultas, 2007; van Zanten, 2003; Whitty, 2000) is a common strategy in this sense. Van Zanten (2003, p. 109), for example, demonstrates how social diversity in public schools in socially heterogeneous locations cause middle class parents to adopt “exclusionary strategies towards the lower classes”.

Whitty (2000), on the other hand, who states some middle-class parents’ success in “colonizing” some parts of public education to make it “safe” for their children, underlines the exclusionary character of these acts towards working class children. He uses the concepts of “self-exclusion” or “exclusion at the top” in order to draw attention to the relationality of working-class failure in education. According to him, the use of social exclusion in this context provides that

instead of seeing the failure as the result of a deficit in working-class homes, materially and culturally, it invited us to entertain the notion that working-class failure was a relational outcome of middle-class power to define what counts as knowledge and achievement (2000, p. 287)

Conway (1997), going one step forward argues that the acts and strategies of middle-classes in an education system in which strategic choosing expresses a common

approach with the “ideology of parentocracy”, constitute a form of symbolic violence against the working-class families who do not have sufficient resources to develop strategic attitude towards education. “Within the habitus of parents where choice and taste enhanced their distinction, it could be argued that this almost reached a state of hegemony because of the extent of exclusion of working-class parents from playing the games of education” (Conway, 1997, p. 12). Reay also underlines the relationality of schooling practices of different classes by problematizing school choice. Again, exclusion is the key concept in this relationality. Like Whitty, she also uses “exclusion at the top”, in her words this provides to see “the role of those doing the excluding rather than seeing the problem as located in the socially excluded” (Reay, 2004, p. 538). According to her, middle classes’ search for exclusivity in education is the exclusion of working classes, so “social exclusivity is the counterpoise to social exclusion” (p. 539). Like Ball, she asserts that “exclusion is a core strategy of the fearful middle classes in ensuring the social and economic reproduction of their children” (p. 555) and this is how, in reality, marketization of education reproduces and intensifies social inequalities.

Another study (Bagley, et al., 2010) on the process of choice supports this understanding of school choice as a social process and exclusion as the core concept by focusing on the “negative aspect of choice”; rejecting/avoiding schools, and in this way, questions the meaning of choice. They find out that rejecting a school is not based solely on the academic considerations of parents in objective sense, but a kind of social selection is on the process; parents concern such as social class and race when they decide. Social selection; “involves parents selecting the human environment (pupils and staff) according to the social type (social class, ethnic mix) that they consider suits or will most benefit their child” (2010, p. 320). In this sense, they argue that social exclusion is the key concept in school choice and is not about choice which is “expressing a preference for one option against another, equally positioned alternative” (2010, p. 323). The conclusion to be drawn from the study is that within an uneven educational and social structure the concept that should be focused is exclusion rather than choice.

This conclusion is crucial implying that exclusion should be searched not only in the relationship between the agents but also in the agents' relationship with educational structure. In other words, exclusion is not only realized through the reciprocal practices and strategies of the agents, but also operates through the educational structure which necessitates to include supply side of education/choice equation. However, despite the references to the characteristics of educational structure, the logic behind the educational policies etc., an extensive body of the literature relied upon the parents' agency and their actions in the analysis of inequalities in educational field. Parents, especially the middle-class parents, are the crucial actors of the exclusionary processes and lower classes' exclusion. Their search for exclusivity or strategies of social closure express how macro processes such as marketization of education is realized in practice. An important deficit in these studies is the role of institutional context and schools as the organizations of educational service delivery in creation of social inequalities in education.

As I will demonstrate in Chapter 5, the cases of popular schools in Ankara confirm choice as a social process, and exclusion is the key concept to understand this process despite the legal regulations that restricts families' actions in terms of school choice. I will also demonstrate on the basis of the findings of the field research that social closure is not produced only by the parents but also by the school principals, so the school principals, also the teachers are the crucial actors of exclusionary processes. In this sense, practices of school principals and teachers, also how they decide, their perceptions, values etc. are also crucial and requires to focus on school as field since it enables to investigate the relations both among the parents and between the parents and professionals as the actors of educational supply contextualizing them institutionally. This requires to analyze policy level not only in terms of provided choice opportunities, but also regarding the characteristics of education system for the investigation on educational inequalities. In brief, the thesis argues that the parents are not isolated individuals from other parents, and the social and relational character of their decisions and strategies demonstrates how they create inequalities, but at the same time they are not isolated from the operation of the education system, as well and its inequalities.

So far, I discussed how the parents', especially middle class parents' school choices are relational, motivated mainly with reducing interaction with lower class parents, so exclusionary towards them. This is how their practices reproduce social inequalities creating school segregation. In this context, parents' relational strategies triggered by their social positions determined by the resources/capitals they possess creating inequalities at school level ensure the continuity of the social hierarchies. However, in order to conceptualize school as field regarding how educational inequalities are created, it is necessary to establish its relationship not only with the social field but also with educational field of which it is a part. In other words, given that field refers to the relatively autonomous rules, to reveal educational inequalities within the theoretical framework of field necessitates to examine how social hierarchies are mediated by field specific rules and create educational inequalities within schools. This brings us to the education system, policies, institutions etc., and inequalities led by the educational supply. As I stated before, exclusion is the key concept here, because it enables to see the relationality between educational supply and demand in creation of educational inequalities. Since the decisions of the parents are based on exclusion of particular social groups rather than purely academic preferences, exclusion better explains the relational character of the parents' actions than choice. Here, with reference to Bourdieu and his approach to inequality mainly based on uneven distribution of resources/capitals, we can assert that it is not only the relationality of strategies of the parents expressed by exclusion in the field, but also the relationality between the parents and educational supply which contributes to the unequal structure of the field regarding distribution of resources.

Thus, the intent here is rather than to reveal how the social inequalities are reproduced in the field through the relational practices and strategies of the agents depending upon their positions in the social hierarchy, how the field generates practices and strategies that create educational inequalities at school level being restrictive or enabling according to the positions of the agents. In that sense, it is not enough to include uneven distribution of resources within the context of resources the agents possess. It is also necessary to include the distribution of resources within the context of educational inequalities led by the educational supply. By this way, we can reveal the relationality between the agents and field specific structure in creation

of educational inequalities. Now, in order to draw attention to the role of educational supply in creation of educational inequalities that generate exclusionary practices and strategies, I will discuss school choice as a policy question.

2.2. School choice as a policy question

School choice is a common theme for the examination of differentiated schooling decisions of different class groups as demonstrated, but at the same time it refers to the policy question, more specifically, the school placement systems and educational policies that frame these decisions, for the (re)production of class-based educational inequalities. As stated, there is an extensive body of literature which demonstrates that the policies which provide more opportunity to parents for school choice are prone to create social class-based inequalities in education since parental choice reproduces already existing inequalities by increasing social segregation among schools. The significant part of this literature is based on research in the “pro-choice” countries where school choice is explicitly adopted policy and education is defined as a commodity, such as the UK (Lynch & Moran, 2006).

However, interestingly, varied studies from different countries with different legal regulations on parental choice have similar findings about the class-based differentiation of school decisions and practices, similar tendencies of the same class groups, especially the middle-classes. For example, a study from Argentina where there is no official policy of school choice, and the school placement system is based on catchment regulations, shows that some parents depending upon their socio-economic status, can differentiate their schooling practices from others; they choose private schools or “informally choose” schools in public education using their power despite the legal restrictions. The study concludes that “processes of socio-economic segregation are not necessarily linked to policies that subsidize consumer’s choice, or to the emergence of educational markets” (Norodowski, 2002, p. 182). Another study from a comparative perspective supports this conclusion by comparing two examples from different countries; one is Paris where there is no official policy of school choice, and the other is London where parental choice is officially supported (Raveaud & van Zanten, 2006). They find out similar patterns in schooling practices

and choices of middle-class parents who have similar considerations depending on neighbourhoods with social and ethnic heterogeneity, they engage in two cities. In addition to the limited effect of varieties in policies, what they also emphasize is the importance of “local context”, socio-spatial segregation levels of cities and neighbourhoods for class-based differentiation of schools. Another study from a similar local context that is ethnically diverse, Amsterdam, more explicitly argues that although housing market and policies on schooling differ, “the strategies of the Amsterdam middle classes are very similar to other countries, suggesting homologies of class between national contexts” (Boterman, 2012, p. 1130). Similar patterns in the countries where there are different regulations regarding school choice are used to prove that choice is mainly a “bottom-up process” (Raveaud & van Zanten, 2006). According to these studies one can argue that rather than school placement regulations and educational policies, the residential segregation levels are more effective on the decisions of the parents and on the school segregation, since the middle-class tendency to avoid or escape from social mix is common across the countries where the policies are in opposite direction regarding school choice.

This leads to two consequences: 1) When the policy level is ignored in the analysis on the grounds that it is ineffective, the parents and their actions as the primary reason of educational inequalities gain strength, and the analyzes remain at individual level, or 2) the practices of the parents are directly linked to the global processes of neoliberalization in education, but how these processes direct the practices of the parents is missing without consideration of policy or state level. A way to overcome these problems can be found in Lynch and Moran (2006)’s approach to choice. In their study on Ireland, they argue that although the education system in Ireland is not choice-based and market-driven, the logic of choice can be found in parents’ decisions like in the countries where school choice is officially supported and adopted. In that sense, Irish education system has been shaped within the international educational context “where choice has been established as a centrally defining logic” (p. 222). However, they show that the logic of choice in Ireland is not a consequence of the neoliberal ideology from above, but is a result of historical tensions within the education system that facilitates and enables market-oriented discourse. In that sense, they suggest to contextualize school choice as part

of a broader market oriented discourse of neoliberalism, at the same time as one of the reproduction strategies of class positions within “broader matrix of historical, material and political forces” (2006, p. 222) since the existence of class related inequality is not dependent on the operation of school choice as an officially adopted policy. Thus, rather than to focus on the school choice opportunities provided within the official policies, the characteristics of the educational systems which prone to create inequalities with a historical perspective should be provided in the analysis of class inequalities and parental actions, and this requires policy and state level to be included rather than to be omitted on the grounds that the practices of the parents are homogeneous regardless of the regulations on choice.

The problem in the studies that heavily relied upon parental decision making in their approach to school choice is the limited place given to the policy context which mainly considers whether school choice is available or not. Concentrating on the regulations in the context of availability or unavailability of school choice leads to evaluate parents’ choosing and exclusionary practices despite the restrictive regulations as evidences that prove school choice is “a bottom-up process”. As such, educational inequalities are produced by parents, their decisions and practices are the main reasons/determinants of injustices. What is ignored is that the parents already act in an unjust educational structure developed historically.

Contrary to the countries where school choice is official policy, school choice opportunities for the parents are restricted by address-based school placement system in the public primary and lower-secondary education in Turkey, and competition among the schools is not supported officially. Despite this, differentiation among the public schools cannot be explained focusing solely on the actions of the parents. It is understood from the interviews that the parents’ decisions and practices express their response to the inequalities stemming from the state and its policies, as well, although they have strong social class considerations and are exclusionary towards some parents in less powerful positions. Moreover, what is also understood from the field research is that the parents are but one group of actors for the creation of educational inequalities in the context of school differentiation. The role of school principals and teachers that is understood to be crucial in popular schools,

demonstrate that parents are not alone in further creation of educational inequalities. This reveals the need to include the school level besides the policy level in the examination of exclusionary schooling practices and decisions of the parents.

Thus, the thesis intends to broaden the ground on which the supply side of education is included in the examination of educational inequalities, rather than limit it to the (un)availability of school choice options. To this end, educational policies and the main characteristics of the education system that is prone to create inequalities are considered regarding the structure of the field that generate practices and strategies in further creation of inequalities at schools. Thus, I will place the schools in institutional context, and this also requires to focus on the schools within the context of institutional design of educational service delivery with a special attention to how they run, and their autonomy in the implementation of education policies. The “informal choosing” of parents in Turkey where school choice of parents is not supported officially seems to confirm that it is a bottom-up process, but the role of the school principals in determining the rules of “informal choosing” reveals that choice is also mediated within schools, by the actors of educational supply.

Some studies point out that policies can be connected to educational inequalities not only regarding their effects on parents and their actions, but also in terms of their impacts on institutions. Oria et al. (2007), who focus on the policy context through which choice is practiced, argue that education policies in UK lead an understanding which supports “personal values and justifies the competitive action of parents in search for privilege through education, and these policies produce a specific version of parents which authorizes or celebrates these particular kinds of actions” (p. 92). According to them, the policies which direct parents to act in particular way, have a similar effect on institutions, as well (p. 99):

The decentralization of decision-making to competing institutions in a proxy market within which they survive on the basis of their responses to consumer choice requires that institutions and individuals give priority to the maximization of their own interests and leads to the ignoring or displacement of issues of public good and general social well-being

This shows that schools should also be placed in the institutional context; the relationship between the educational policies and schools as the organizations of educational service delivery should also be included in the examination of educational practices and the strategies of the agents. Here, how the school choice or more generally the educational policies operate and practiced within schools come to the fore, and the autonomy of educational professionals, especially the school principals in the implementation of the educational policies gain special importance.

However, the literature on the operation and realization of school choice at school level is limited, so the role of educational institutions, specifically the schools in shaping, enabling or restricting the actions/practices of parents is rarely examined. Studies with social organization of schooling perspective can be given as examples to these studies since they focus on the school level although its connection to the educational policies is not paid much attention.

In these studies, the focus is on the “inside the black-box of the schools” and how schools impact on the social inequalities (Berends & Zottola, 2009, p. 45). The school effect, the effect of attended school on the student learning and success, has a particular place in these studies. For example, early studies on school effect and their input-output model which places student learning as output, and organizational resources like expenditures, teacher characteristics, equipment etc. as inputs are criticized for not paying attention to “what goes inside the school, the production process itself” (Gamoran, Secada, & Marrett, 2000). Against this, social organization of schooling approach makes distinction between school conditions and schooling activity and problematize the relation between them and their effect on the student learning (Bidwell & Kasarda, 1980). Organizational resources (material, human, and social) including leadership, administrative support, collaboration etc. form the organizational context of learning and teaching processes (Gamoran, Secada, & Marrett, 2000). Social organizational perspective considers curricular tracks, social organization of classrooms etc. when explaining the schooling processes comprised of acts of students and teachers, and examining students’ achievement (Bidwell & Kasarda, 1980). Structure and processes of different types of schools are examined regarding their correlation with differentiation of opportunities in education,

occupation etc. (Berends & Zottola, 2009). Although the approach brings into question what goes inside the school as organization, the focus is more on the student achievement and inequalities related to this. These studies are important to show that academic achievement and success is not only related with family background/social positions of families, but the structures and processes in the schools are also effective on the creation of inequalities related to achievement.

As stated before, academic achievement is one of the issues where the effect of class position on educational differentiation can be seen besides educational choices. Since the focus of the thesis is on the choice related inequalities in education, the literature on the social organization of schooling included with regards to its approach to school as organization which consists of “system of relationships” rather than being “collection of individuals in isolation” (Gamoran, Secade, & Marrett, 2000, p. 59), and its evoking that schools with their structures and process are important sites for the creation of educational inequalities. I further argue that schools also matter for the creation of inequalities related with choice and parents’ strategies.

This is indicated by limited number of studies; schools can have a direct and significant role in reproduction of class-based differences in education on the basis of school choice practices of the parents. For example, Lynch and Moran (2006) who argue that there is an uneven attention on demand, rather than supply side of education/choice equation in the literature, assert that “schools are not passive recipients of parents' class choices; they actively determine the parameters of choice” (2006, p. 225), because, as they point out, schools have classed identities; “as bodies representing the classed interests of a particular locale, they produce and construct themselves so as to exclude or include on the basis” (p. 226). Their research on the schools in Ireland finds out that although there is no restriction for the different classes to apply to the schools, and the schools cannot select their students officially, in practice, some schools use indirect means to avoid/reject parents from certain social class groups that they do not want to serve. The same point, the “informal selectivity” of schools, is also pointed by some other studies. Noreisch’s study has a similar finding in Berlin; the schools, especially the principals are the key actors in the enrolment, although they are not allowed, and placement to schools is regulated

by catchment areas. They are identified as “hidden gatekeepers” in the study, because of their power to reject/accept applications of students out of the enrolment area, so to determine who will be included and excluded (Noreisch, 2007).

Some studies demonstrate that not only school principals but also teachers are the key actors. Brantlinger (2003) who states that “damaging repercussions for school equity arise not only from status and power differentials between affluent families and poor families but also from differentials within school personnel” (p. 107), shows that teachers differ according to their concerns about schooling, their ideal students, their understanding and approach to class inequalities in the schools, perceptions about the parents and students, and the relationship between academic success and socio-economic status, and this has a significant effect on the creation of educational inequalities.

These studies which are few in number are significant to indicate that the parents’ strategies of social closure have counterparts in the schools. They are counterposed by the professionals in the schools especially by the school principals. The cases of popular schools in Ankara confirms this inference, and indicates that social closure is not only identified with the parents’ strategies, but also with the strategies of the principals, so the social closure refers to the strategies and practices of the parents as well as, in a broader sense, to the internal dynamics of the schools that differentiate these schools from other public schools.

So far, I discussed the relationality of educational practices and school choices of different classes, and assert that exclusion enables to grasp this relationality, so the parents’ school decisions indicated as exclusionary strategies. Then I asserted that in the formation and maintenance of field the relationality between the parents and educational supply is as important as the relationality between the strategies of the parents. Education system and policies regarding especially their role in the distribution of resources, contributes to the unequal educational structure that generates practices and strategies of the parents which create inequalities at school level. Therefore, it is important to place the schools within the institutional context,

while focusing on the schools, in order to reveal how the educational inequalities, in the context of public school differentiation are created by the strategies and practices of the parents.

I will now assert that the schools should also be placed within geographic context. In line with my context specific account of structure which is provided by field theory, I propose that the geographical distribution of educational resources and agents is significant for the formation and maintenance of field. The positions of the agents in the field also depend on their geographical positions with respect to the geographical distribution of educational resources. In that sense, while contextualizing the schools geographically, I consider geographical distribution of both educational supply and demand.

2.3. Spatiality of educational inequalities

When we focus on school, spatiality of education, for example where the schools are located inevitably gains importance since in the simplest sense, social composition of the schools determined geographically regardless of the availability of parental choice opportunities provided by the legal regulations. The regulations on school choice mainly affects the scale of the geographical space that structure the social composition of the schools. For example, if school placement is regulated by catchment areas and parents are not allowed for school choice, it can be expected that the neighbourhood scale gains importance for the social composition of the schools.

However, as I will show, the cases of popular schools in Ankara indicate insufficiency of this logic in the sense that neighbourhood is not a sufficient geographical scale for the determination of the social composition of these schools, since the catchment areas of the schools are much wider than the neighbourhoods in practice. In that sense, the scale of the geographical space that structures the social composition of the schools is not a technical issue determined by school placement regulations. Here, how the social composition of these schools is formed, in other words, how these schools are accessed, so the spatial accessibility dynamics gain

significance. At this point, I claim that access to these schools is subject to negotiations and struggles among the parents and school professionals, as well as determined by school placement regulations. Thus, the examination of the reciprocally adopted strategies and practices of the parents and the professionals in the schools reveals the dynamics of spatial accessibility, which refer to the spatio-institutional dynamics that differentiate the schools from other public schools. In line with the claim that school differentiation is a multidimensional process and necessitates a multilevel approach to the creation of educational inequalities, spatiality of educational inequalities should also be approached in a multi-level context. In the case of popular schools in Ankara spatiality is inherent both to the structural aspects of educational inequalities (geographical distribution of educational supply and demand) and to the agents' strategies in relation to those inequalities, and schools are where the interaction between the two expressed as spatio-institutional dynamics can be grasped. However, in parallel to the dominance of the studies which focus on individual actions, parents' choices in their analysis of educational inequalities, spatiality of educational inequalities is mostly associated with geographical distribution of demand, more explicitly, residential segregation.

Butler and Hamnett (2007) offer a brief explanation to the relationship between education and geographical space: They argue that socio-spatial differentiation and segregation is linked to education in two ways: 1- there are spatial differences in educational provision, which refers to the geographical distribution of educational services and their quality (supply-side differences) and 2- concentration of different social groups in different areas, which refers to the demand-side differences, which is effective on the differences in outcomes (composition or area effects) (Butler & Hamnett, 2007, pp. 1165-6). This implies that supply and demand sides of education meets spatially/geographically which means that a comprehensive approach to spatiality of educational inequalities requires to take into account both sides.

Of these two dimensions, "demand side" receives most of the attention and spatiality is discussed in relation to the educational strategies of families in relation to the residential segregation. Rather than problematizing the differences in educational provision and uneven geographical distribution of quality schools, residential

segregation is taken as the key factor that differentiates the schooling practices of families, and also is affected by these strategies and practices. Actually, it is very hard to distinguish supply-side differences from composition effects, because social differences, ethnic, racial or social class-based, are regarded as the main determinants of differentiation among the schools in terms of educational quality or achievement. Therefore, they are the main determinants of the demand from the families, and accordingly determine their strategies. As such, schools are identified with the characteristics of the social composition of their neighbourhoods, cannot be separated from the socio-spatial segregation patterns within cities. There is an overemphasis on the social composition of the neighbourhoods, also choices and strategies of the parents in relation to the social composition of neighbourhoods.

In these studies, space is mostly regarded as one of the factors that affect the schooling decisions of the parents. In conformity with the studies on social class and educational inequalities, studies show that the effect of space, more precisely, the physical distance varies among different social class groups. While it is the most influential factor on the schooling practices of the working-classes, middle classes can manage and overcome the restrictiveness of physical distance. In that sense, social differentiation among the schools does not only reflect the existing residential segregation patterns, but the schooling practices of middle classes which result in school differentiation intensify or reproduce socio-spatial segregation.

Spatial distance is the key factor in the school choices of working class parents, most of the studies underline the sensitivity of working class schooling to spatial distance (Ball, 2003; Ball et al., 1995; Reay, 2004) and their “chaining to space” in relation to the exclusionary schooling practices of middle classes (Reay & Lucey, 2003). There is an extensive literature on the locally constrained character of working class parents and children’ schooling practices and choices (Ball et al., 1995; Vincent et al., 2010). In Ball et al.’s “circuits of schooling” which refers to the class-related dispositions of choice and each of which expresses parents’ different engagement and relation to choice, class and space, the “local school choosers” are from working class while the ones who chose cosmopolitan schools are middle-class. They assert that “for the working-class choosers space and family organization were very often the key

elements in choice-making” (1995, p. 58). Middle classes with their sufficient resources/capacity and ability, mostly transcend the spatial restrictions (Reay, 2004). Although their engagement with space is very different, spatial distance is also crucial for the middle classes such that it significantly determines their decisions on residential place, on where they live (Butler & Hamnett, 2011). The divergence from the working class is their ability of overcoming (physical) distance, and to this end, their strategies differ socio-spatially.

Boterman (2012) identifies four middle-class strategies in the literature: 1- Suburbanization; this is based on the racial considerations of white middle class families and common in the US cities, 2- Moving to the middle-class areas within cities in order to minimize the interaction with different social groups, 3- “Travelling greater distances from home to school”; this is seen in more special contexts like London where education market does not correspond to housing market and private schooling is extensive, 4- The middle-class parents’ “colonization” of schools in socially heterogenous neighbourhoods.

All of these strategies show different engagement with space and several studies linked this differentiation to the resources, identities and values of middle-class parents, but what is common to all is the middle-classes’ ability of transcending the restrictions of physical distance in the search for a privileged or secure educational environment for their children and its consequence of socio-spatial segregation. This also shows that middle-classes’ strategies of social closure are objectified within the space, so express socio-spatial closure in that exclusion of the lower classes realized through the control over space. Although it is weaker in the third strategy, traveling from home to school, these strategies reveal close link between residential location and education, also conformity between the social composition of schools and neighbourhoods that place the issue of socio-spatial segregation at the center of the studies in the literature.

As I will show, in the cases of popular schools both traveling from home to schools and “colonization” of schools are the adopted strategies, but because of the fact that the mobility is in the public school sector rather than to private schools, and the link

connection of the neighbourhoods with the schools is weak, the cases diverge from other examples. The divergence is not only because of the difference in the strategies of families, which stem from particular characteristics of residential segregation but also because of the complexity of the spatial dimension in that school differentiation is not only determined by socio-spatial segregation in static way. Thus, socio-spatial segregation is significant but not the central issue in the thesis.

However, as mentioned, the great extent of the literature on spatiality of education focuses on the link between school choices and residential segregation. Whether school choice increases socio-spatial segregation in the cities or not is a common subject of investigation in that sense.

2.3.1. Socio-spatial segregation and school differentiation

Parallel to the findings of the studies on the relation between school choice and social segregation among schools, school choice has a crucial impact on socio-spatial segregation as the studies demonstrate; school choice both affects and is affected from residential segregation (Taylor & Gorard, 2001; Taylor, 2010). Commonly drawn picture is that parents, especially the middle-class parents choose residential places where successful schools are located, the increasing concentration of middle-class children supports school success, and increases the demand for housing in these places that raises the housing prices and rents. A kind of “vicious circle” is on the process; school segregation and residential segregation feed each other.

Here, the spatiality of educational inequalities refers to the demographic processes and explained mainly with the push and pull factors of locational areas. As a consequence, we face with almost natural process that families with similar social positions close up spatially, they choose schools by choosing their neighbourhoods to live, so social profile of schools and their neighbourhoods corresponds. What is overlooked in these studies is the spatial inequality led by geographical distribution of educational supply, more precisely, the uneven geographical distribution of educational services. This is overlooked since the variety in the educational provision

and quality of education the schools provide corresponds to varieties in the characteristics of the social composition in the schools in these studies.

Here, I claim that the parents' strategies of social closure to secure the educational environment for their children that is claimed to express socio-spatial closure above due to the fact that it objectified within the space and realized through control over space, express socio-spatial closure also due to the fact that it is driven by the parents' attempt for access to educational resources which are unevenly distributed over the city space. Thus, school differentiation cannot be reduced to the differences in social compositions of the schools, as it cannot be reduced to the relational strategies of the parents.

In Turkey where the room for maneuver regarding school choice is restricted formally by a state-centered educational system, the link between residential location and education is weak despite the residential address-based character of school placement system. Choosing neighbourhood is not a guarantee for better quality education. Thus, in Turkey we face with a more school-based process; "informal choosing" of families despite having strong social considerations, is school-oriented. This makes the schools targets of the parents' strategies of social closure. Since neighbourhoods do not ensure meeting their expectations, regarding social closure, both spatial access and forming the schools as privileged places becomes a subject of struggle and negotiation that forms the internal dynamics of the schools.

This also reveals the need to deal with the schools themselves as the organizations of educational service delivery operating in a geography of unevenly distributed educational supply, rather than as places where particular social groups concentrated. In this sense, the cases of popular schools necessitate to go beyond the link between residential segregation and school differentiation that is widely held subject in the literature on the spatiality of educational inequalities. Even though there are studies that demonstrate the inconformity of their cases to the commonly drawn picture, mentioned above, again the main issue in these studies is the relationship between the socio-spatial segregation and school differentiation. As Boterman states, variety in the studies from different countries stems from the differences associated with the

housing markets, national and local education policies (mostly in terms of school choice opportunities), meanings of social class, ethnicity and race (2012, p. 1131).

The “vicious circle” which expresses an ideal situation is more clearly identified with segregated American cities while there are some differences in European cities (Molultas, 2007). For example, Taylor and Gorard (2001)’s examination of the link between residential differentiation and school segregation in England reveals a strong link between the two; socially segregated schools both is a result of residential segregation and has an impact on it. As they state, “after a decade of increasing social mixing in terms of poverty and ethnicity, schools remain socially divided chiefly because of the socially divided nature of housing” (2001, p. 1829). On the other hand, London illustrates a more specific and different case for the same issue. Butler and Robson (2010) argue that middle classes in London develop a strategic approach to schooling because of the heterogenous social composition within the schools and neighbourhoods. Since the distribution of private schools and successful state schools in London does not overlap with areas of high cost housing, parents schooling practices highlight all metropolitan area “as a single market”. As stated,

the middle class congregated in areas where there were ‘good’ schools or if they were unable or unwilling to live in their ‘catchment’ areas or pay, then they used their well-honed social and organizational skills to get their children into what they regarded as the better schools elsewhere (Robson, 2010, p. 9).

This is the third strategy which is identified by Boterman (2012), “travelling greater distances from home to school”, which is ensured by the existence of an extensive private schooling, so mobility is mostly towards private schools. Another study (Rangvid, 2007) on the link between residential differentiation and school segregation also demonstrates a nuanced situation in Copenhagen; the relationship between residential and school segregation in Copenhagen is weak; while residential (ethnic) segregation levels are low in the metropolitan area, at the school level, ethnic segregation level is high, “close to the levels of the cities in the US” (2007, p. 1330). Rangvid explains this situation with the school choice. According to him, low levels of socio-spatial segregation may not cause low levels of school segregation:

“when school choice options are available, moderate residential segregation is compatible with high school segregation levels” (2007, p. 1348). On the other hand, research from Helsinki, Finland finds that despite the egalitarian character of education system, increasing levels of ethnic and social segregation in the city leads school differentiation as the families’ school choices are driven by their attempts to escape from the schools located in the deprived neighbourhoods. This stems from the fact that rather than school/educational quality, what they mostly consider is the school environment which refers to the social composition of the schools and their catchment areas (Bernelius & Vaattovaara, 2016).

The case of Athens again demonstrates a more specific situation. Moultas’s research departs from questioning of basic assumption about the school segregation and residential segregation; residential mobility of middle classes in the search for successful schools and more specifically, the underlying assumption of neighbourhood effect in this approach. Athens is a good case to question this assumption, because it offers a context of relatively low residential mobility and segregation, and of extended private schooling. He demonstrates that the importance of private education and low residential mobility crucially affect the relation between schooling strategies and socio-spatial segregation; the relation between the two is different from the dominant model, since it is hard to talk about neighbourhood effect, because 1- private schools do not reinforce segregation in city, but they cause school segregation on a “fluid spatial scale” based on the daily isolation of children from their residential places, also 2- middle-class strategies of schooling is more about formation of “micro privileged places”, rather than directly linked to neighbourhoods, but leads to selective schools.

Moultas’s findings are important for the cases of popular schools in the sense that what we see in these two schools in Ankara can be evaluated as a kind of mixture of these two findings; it is the distinguished public schools that create segregation on a fluid space and that are socially selective as a result of parents search for exclusivity in micro scale. On the other hand, this constitutes only a part of the picture. The popular public schools in Ankara that the research concentrates on represent an

escape from the “bad” schools in the deprived areas, as well. This indicates the existence of neighbourhood effect in some neighbourhoods in the city.

2.3.2. Neighbourhood effect

Neighbourhood effect, that is argued to be absent in Athens by Moultras, is one of the main assumptions of the dominant approach to the spatiality of educational inequalities. Studies highlight the restrictive effect of deprived neighbourhoods on the success in education, access to educational opportunities and outcomes etc. or vice versa, the positive effect of the affluent neighbourhoods on the educational attainment, opportunities etc.

For example, Illsley (2002) points out that schools in cities are prone to cluster children of families with similar social positions, and the effect of the schools in deprived areas on the academic achievement is very low. In that sense, the schools have limited effect on the social mobility of kids who live in the deprived areas. Similarly, Gordon & Monastiriotis (2006) focus on the role of neighbourhood effect in terms of spatial concentration of (dis)advantages in creation of social inequality and exclusion. Education is taken as a test case for the investigation on neighbourhood effect in relation to the catchment areas. They argue that inequality in segregated areas arises mainly from the positive impacts of segregation for privileged social groups, rather than negative impacts for the ones in subordinate positions. Another study which mainly focus on the relationship between the differentiation among the public schools and socio-spatial segregation asserts that there is a clear correspondence between the poles of socio-spatial segregation and schooling (Byrne & Rogers, 1996). Based on the fact that poor performing school are located in the deprived areas, they argue that especially in the locations at the bottom regarding the socio-spatial segregation, the effect of social composition is very strong. Judging by the relation between poor performing schools and high social deprivation in their locational areas they assert that “easy assertions about internal school operations which disregard the effect of social context, are essentially vacuous” (1996, p. 32). Similarly, Bradford (1991) underlines the effect of social composition on academic achievement by focusing on the catchment areas of

schools. The study problematizes social segregation among the catchment areas, also within the catchment areas of the schools, and it is shown that the effect of catchment areas with similar social composition may differ according to their internal social segregation. It is argued that “local residential environment” of students has impact on their success, and this can occur directly on individual student or indirectly through the effect on the social environment in school (1991, p. 330). In that sense, beyond the effect of social composition, the effect of the degree of social interaction among the students is underlined, and socio-spatial segregation level of the catchment areas is associated with educational inequalities regarding their link with social interaction in the study.

Studies on neighbourhood effect is concerned with the opportunities offered by the neighbourhoods to their residents, and schools, as the important neighbourhood institutions attract researchers’ attention in this context (Sykes & Musterd, 2011, p. 1308). The relation between the neighbourhoods and schools regarding the effect on the educational outcomes is mostly established in the context of demographic processes and social composition. Here, the schools are mostly problematized as sites of social interaction among the parents and students, including peer effect. The focus is mostly on the effect of social composition of schools on the students’ educational outcomes, for example, the effect of peer group on the students’ motivation, educational attitudes etc. (Thrupp et al., 2002). In these studies schools are conceptualized “as being organized locally and identifiable by reference to demographic and neighbourhood characteristics” (Arum, 2000, p. 395).

Arum (2000) states that this conventional understanding of school and neighbourhood effect has been challenged by recent material and theoretical developments. For example, developments in technology, spatial organization of cities, individual mobility etc. challenge the (traditional) community-based understanding of neighbourhood, and undermine the significance of the link between the schools and the neighbourhoods established on the basis of social composition. Theoretical challenge on the other hand, has come from neoinstitutionalist theory which underlines the institutional structure in contextualization of the schools, such

as legal regulations, political institutions and other organizations they interact. Accordingly, it is argued that

defining school communities in ecological terms at the neighbourhood-level misses the extent to which school practices are shaped by larger sets of institutional forces. Today, more than ever, a school's relevant community is not just a neighbourhood demographic environment, but equally an institutional environment (Arum, 2000, p. 400).

This implies that schools are the organizations relatively autonomous from the social processes in their neighbourhoods. Some researchers also support this and show that neighbourhood effect is mediated through school, and the relation between the two varies according to the school choice options and regulations, school placement systems, urban scale and educational service provision (Sykes & Musterd, 2011). For example, Kauppinen (2008) who states that how or through which mechanisms neighbourhood effect operates in neighbourhood effect studies are far from being clear, finds out that socio-economic characteristics of students is associated with choices independently from the neighbourhood composition. In that sense, he argues that “the effect of neighbourhood’s educational composition on educational choice is for a large part mediated by school’s socioeconomic composition” (2008, p. 379).

In conformity with the studies that challenge the understanding of neighbourhood effect and its basic assumption of overlap between the neighbourhood and the social compositions of schools, and its conceptualization of school as a site of social interaction, the two cases of popular public schools in Çankaya and Keçiören will reveal that school context matters and has a relative autonomy from the neighbourhood context for the examination of educational inequalities, since; (1) the popular schools’ catchment areas do not overlap with their enrolment areas and neighbourhoods they located, and (2) state and policy levels are just as significant as the neighbourhoods for the contextualization of the schools and creation of dynamics that differentiate the schools. Contrary to the assumption of neighbourhood effect studies, spatio-institutional dynamics of the schools have a significant role in the formation of the schools’ social composition, as will be discussed in detail in the fifth chapter. In that sense, the differentiation of these schools from the other public schools is not directly related with the social composition of their neighbourhoods,

so with the residential segregation. In other words, residential segregation patterns are not reflected in these schools but mediated by the internal dynamics of the schools. Furthermore, although the neighbourhoods partly determine the social composition of these schools and in this regard, have an objective effect, they also effect the internal dynamics of the schools through the perceptions of the agents that drive their strategies, so they also connected to the schools symbolically, as well.

The centrality of the neighbourhood effect in the studies which focus on the relationship between residential segregation and educational inequalities is related with their assumption that the middle-classes move to the middle-class neighbourhoods with successful schools in order to benefit from the positive neighbourhood effect, or to escape from the negative neighbourhood effect. In the cases of popular schools in Ankara, the parents' decisions are school-centric as stated. Although they consider social composition of both schools and neighbourhoods, their strategies, rather than increasing residential segregation, reinforce selectivity and exclusivity of the schools which in turn contributes social exclusion. Since the neighbourhoods do not guarantee for the privileged or "secure" educational environment, it is provided by the schools themselves and that is the basis of the crucial role of the school principals.

Clues for the existence of negative neighbourhood effect in Ankara, on the other hand, can be found in Hatipoğlu's study (2013). Hatipoğlu's examination of the relationship between socio-spatial mobility and education is based on a case study of a low-income neighbourhood in Ankara. The study reveals the neighbourhood effect on education in the neighbourhood schools to the extent that there appears an absence of expected progressive role of education. In other words, the effect of spatial entrapment eliminates the role of education in social mobility across generations in the neighbourhood. Complexity of the picture of public schools in Ankara context, negative neighbourhood effect of deprived areas on the one hand and popular public schools on the other hand necessitates to take into account the geographically uneven educational structure and to examine the cases of popular schools in this geographical context. This necessitates to go beyond the neighbourhood scale. Here, again the spatiality, more specifically the spatial

inequality in the context of supply side differences, geographical distribution of differentiated educational provision gains significance. In this sense, the daily spatial mobility of middle-class parents is a response to this inequality indicating a spatial mismatch between the supply and demand sides of educational provision.

2.3.3. Spatial mobility

To focus on the relationship between school and neighbourhood effect or to deal with the spatiality of educational inequalities at neighbourhood level, gives rise to the understanding that educational inequalities are static and separated geographically, and hinders a comprehensive approach to the hierarchical schooling structure and its geographical expression. However, spatial mobility of parents, their mobility towards popular public schools rejecting neighbourhood schools reveals that neither schools nor the neighbourhoods can be considered in isolation. There is a need for a holistic approach to comprehend the relationality among them indicated by the daily spatial mobility of parents. The notion of field allows to develop such an approach since the conceptualization of schools as fields requires to reveal the educational inequalities at school level in relation to the educational field.

Daily spatial mobility is rarely problematized in the related literature. One of the studies that problematize the mobility of children comes from France. Poupeau and others (Poupeau et al., 2007) examine school transfers among the Levallois and neighbouring two towns and find different “circuits of schooling” with reference to Ball. Like in Ball’s study, these circuits refer different engagement of families with space, but what is also emphasized is “local situation” as a kind of “mobility capital” enabling access to schools. This is related with not only types and volume of capitals families possessed, but also where families live and available or accessible educational provision. Here, the ability to deploy cultural and economic capital is dependent upon local characteristics of education and its accessibility. In this sense, they assert that “the spatial dimension has a significant impact on school placement practices in that it can ensure a greater or smaller return on family capital” (2007, p. 46). The circuits of schooling across the three neighbouring towns they found indicate existence of a hierarchical schooling structure. Problematization of spatial

mobility of the students enables to deal with these circuits relationally and grasp this differentiation in a hierarchical way. Spatial mobility is one of the factors among available schooling provision, housing opportunities, different types of capitals, which condition the school decisions of the parents. Another important conclusion of the study is that geography of education is significant for the intra-class inequalities and differences. As they assert; “belonging to the same social category does not have much significance in educational spaces that are different due to accessibility, school hierarchy and the resources that families can mobilize” (Poupeau et al., 2007, p. 32, as cited in François & Poupeau, 2005).

In another study, again from France (Barthon & Monfroy, 2010), mobility is a component of spatial capital which refers both to “position capital” (the residential place or workplace), and “situation capital” (a space which is engaged through a range of mobilities). They assume a strategic relationship between actors and space with reference to Levy (1994) according to whom space, being subject to competition, is a source of social inequality, and spatial capital is composed of all means that allow individuals to “manage the distance”. In addition to the effect of residential neighbourhood which is considered by most of the scholars, they attempt to underline the importance of spatial mobility in relation to the inequality in opportunities and chances the individuals have for access to goods and services offered by the city. In that sense, residential location and spatial mobility together form spatial capital as both capacity and resource unevenly distributed and held by the agents and which contributes to the creation of social inequalities.

These studies including spatial mobility in their analysis, offer a more comprehensive approach to the link between school differentiation and socio-spatial segregation, so to the spatiality of educational inequalities. As Barthon and Monfroy states, “the study of mobility offers a new approach to the issue of social and schooling segregation. It shows that segregation develops not only in static terms with regards to a place but also in terms of spatial accessibility dynamics” (p. 191). Spatial mobility requires to consider the geography of educational supply and in that sense, offers a way out from the vicious circle of neighbourhood effect that treats spatiality of educational inequalities in the context of residential segregation and

different social composition of the neighbourhoods, but overlooks the uneven geographical distribution of educational services.

What we will see through the cases of popular schools in Ankara where there is a spatial mismatch between the supply and demand side of public education, daily spatial mobility is not limited to private schools and close areas as well as it is not motivated only by areal differences, but school oriented although the parents have strong social considerations, and social composition of the schools' locational areas is taken into account by them. This necessitates to consider the spatial inequalities stemming from the supply side differences along with residential differentiation. The schools as the organizations of service provision should be contextualized geographically regarding their place in the geography of unevenly distributed educational provision as well. The geographical position of the schools in this regard has a significant effect on the dynamics that shape them as socio-spatial closures.

2.4. School as a socio-spatial field

As stated, geographical mismatch between the supply and demand sides of education behind the spatial mobility of the parents in the cases of popular schools necessitates to consider spatiality of educational inequalities in a broader geographical scale than neighbourhood, and uneven geographical distribution of both educational supply and demand. Moreover, formation of popular schools in the context of differentiation from other public schools is an expression of educational inequalities created by the mutual practices of the actors of educational supply and demand within schools, but in relation to the inequalities stem from the institutional and spatial contexts.

Bourdieu's concept of field provides a framework to grasp the internal dynamics of schools formed by the practices of actors of both supply and demand sides of education in relation to the inequalities stem from the supply side of education and its spatiality. In Bourdieusian sense, "fields are arenas of struggle for control over valued resources, and dominant and subordinate positions in the fields are determined according to the types and amount of capital" (Swartz, 1997, pp. 122-123). Field, together with capital and habitus is the central concept of Bourdieu's

understanding. Fields are identified with objective relations between the positions determined by the volume and composition of the capitals possessed.

In analytical terms, a field may be defined as a network, or a configuration of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation in the structure of the distribution of species of power (capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 97).

He uses the analogy of game to explain field while underlining that unlike game, “fields follow rules and regularities that are not explicit” (1992, p. 98). The stake in a game is a product of the competition and struggle between the players (agents and institutions) who play the game with their cards (capitals) which are both weapons and stakes of the struggles within a field and whose relative value is depended upon the specific field.

According to Bourdieu, “to think in terms of field, is to think relationally” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 96). This means that positions of the agents and institutions in a field are determined relative to each other. Thus, the positions of the parents or schools are indicated with reference to other parents and schools. This provides the ground for a holistic approach that I need especially to the spatiality of educational inequalities which have continuity or relationality across different geographic scales, neighbourhood, district, and province. Besides this, relational understanding inherent in the notion of field also requires to consider the relationship between the school, while conceptualizing it as field with and intent to reveal how the practices and strategies of the agents create educational inequalities, and educational field in terms of its structure unequally operate for the agents. This is provided through the examination of the educational inequalities led by the supply side of education and establish the relationship between them and school as field, that is contextualizing the school institutionally.

In line with all this concerns, the operationalization of the concept of field in the thesis is provided by regarding schooling in Ankara as a socio-spatial field, and the

schools as sub-fields drawing on the idea of “organizational field” and “organization as field” that is based on the application of Bourdieu’s concept of field to the organizational analysis (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008). Rather than deployment of the concept horizontally to express different domains such as religious and educational, “organization as field” is based on using the concept vertically, to explain the relations between the levels in a domain. Theoretical approach to organization as field considers the power relations within organizations, rather than regarding them as unified, single and homogenous entities. Moreover, by taking the inter-organizational interactions into account, each organization is positioned in relation to other organizations in “organizational field”. In that sense, conceptualization of the schools as sub-fields and schooling as an organizational field, allows to reveal the internal dynamics of the schools in relation to their relational positions against each other and other schools. Thus, the framework offered by using the concept of field provides to be able to focus on the internal dynamics of the schools without disconnecting them from institutional context and to show that schools are not homogeneous and neutral to the social inequalities, and what’s going on inside the schools is not independent from power relations.

Schools and parents are positioned in the field of schooling according to type and volume of their capitals. The parents’ actions, schooling practices, are generated by habitus which is in a dialectical relation with the field. As relationality inherent to field reminds, actions and strategies of families, also of the schools which are intersecting with the dynamics of the field of schooling are relational to each other. Although the schools are part of the game ultimately determined by academic achievement and hierarchy formed accordingly, dealing with them as sub-fields provides to reveal the determinants other than the academic achievement of the game in micro-scale. In other words, the positions of the schools in the field of schooling in Ankara that is manifested as popularity or unpopularity with reference to academic achievement are dependent on more nuanced social as well as spatial struggles and negotiations among parents, school principals and teachers in the schools.

As stated, spatiality is inherent both to the structural aspects of educational inequalities (geographical distribution of educational supply and demand) and to the

agents' strategies in relation to those inequalities, and internal dynamics of the schools are produced by the interaction between the two. Accordingly, they are considered as spatio-institutional dynamics in the thesis and argued to express creation of further inequalities at school level. Thus, the field of schooling in Ankara and the schools as sub-fields are socio-spatial fields. The next part aims to elaborate on this claim.

2.4.1. Space and field

Spatiality of educational inequalities in the cases of popular schools in Ankara is apparent both in the agents' classifications and distinctions that drive their actions and strategies, and in the objective structures of the field that determines the positions of the schools and the parents. To further elaborate on this point, I employ the theoretical approach offered by Bourdieu to the relationship between physical space and social space, and objective structures and mental structures.

In Bourdieu's understanding, social space is translated into physical space in the form of distribution of properties and agents, and according to him, "there is no space, in a hierarchical society, that is not hierarchized and which does not express social hierarchies and distances in a more or less distorted or euphemized fashion..." (Bourdieu, 2018, p. 107). In that sense, the position of an agent in physical space or reified social space, indicates her/his position in social space. Two points are crucial in his insight on the relation between physical and social space:

1) Physical space does not simply reflect the social hierarchies/inequalities, but functions as a category of perception; through the objectification in physical space, social hierarchies and divisions are converted into mental structures, into the "system of preferences" (Bourdieu, 1999, p. 126). "Social space is inscribed both in the objectivity of spatial structures and in the subjectivity of mental structures, which are in part the product of the embodiment of these objectified structures" (Bourdieu, 2018, p. 108). He, in that sense, highlights the symbolic meaning of space, physical space/objectified social space "bears both the objectivity of distribution of properties

and agents, also the subjectivity of representations produced by the agents based on the practical knowledge of the distributions” (Bourdieu, 2013, p. 296).

2) Physical space also identifies struggle; space with profits it produces, is a stake in the competition and struggles within different fields, and spatial profits (profits of localization) are divided into two: 1- profits acquired from proximity to rare and desirable goods and agents, 2- profits of position which refers to the symbolic gains of distinction in relation to the possession of a rare or distinguished property. The role of space, in providing a distance and excluding the undesirable (profits of occupation) is also underlined. This role is realized through capital possessed; “capital makes it possible to keep undesirable persons and things at a distance at the same time that it brings closer desirable persons and things...” (Bourdieu, 1999, p. 127). Socio-spatial segregation is the expression of social struggles within fields in physical space; the valued goods and services and the agents tend to concentrate on particular locations since “the stake of these struggles is the construction of spatially based homogeneous groupings, that is, segregation that is both cause and effect of the exclusive usage of a space” (Bourdieu, 2018, p. 106). Moreover, how these spatially mediated social struggles become exclusionary for those who do not display desired properties or deprived of resources is explained by “club effect”:

Like a club founded on the active exclusion of undesirable people, the fashionable neighbourhood symbolically consecrates its inhabitants by allowing each one to partake of the capital accumulated by the inhabitants as a whole. Likewise, the stigmatized area symbolically degrades its inhabitants, who, in return, symbolically degrade it (Bourdieu, 1999, p. 129).

Like clubs, certain selective spaces both require social and symbolic capital besides economic and cultural capital to be included, and provide social and symbolic capital to those who are included (Bourdieu, 2018). What is seen through the popular public schools is that physical space, in terms of distribution of resources and agents objectively structure the field of schooling, also it forms the schools as fields through the subjective representations produced by the agents according to the “practical knowledge of these distributions”. As stated before, socio-spatial segregation is not directly reflected in these schools, but mediated by the spatio-institutional dynamics.

The process, as discussed in the related literature, that turns into a vicious circle, in which the middle classes choose residential locations with successful schools and the concentration of middle-classes reinforces the school success, and increases the housing prices and rents is not a neutral process nor is it a technical process in which socio-spatial segregation is directly reflected in the schools as a result of residential address-based school placement system. The differentiation of schools as popular schools is a result of the negotiations and struggles among the agents in the schools depending on their strategies, although it is fed by the existing residential segregation in distributional and symbolic sense.

Whitin this context, we can identify four axes which connect space and field of schooling. The supply side differences, uneven geographical distribution of educational provision which are mostly overlooked in the literature as mentioned, constitutes the first connection axis. In the cases of popular schools, the struggle is on to obtain appropriate education through the limited number of prestigious public schools which are unevenly distributed over the city space. Thus, the distribution of public investments on education across the city constitutes one axis connects the field of schooling to space.

The second axis is the spatial distribution of demand that is predominantly pointed by the related literature on spatiality of educational inequalities as discussed. As stated before, the catchment areas of the two popular schools are much larger than the neighbourhood scale, and this requires to consider the residential segregation across the city. In that sense, positions of both the districts and the neighbourhoods where the schools are located in this “socially ranked geographical space” become important when examining the dynamics that shape schooling field and schools as sub-fields. Residential segregation is connected to the fields regarding social composition and this is an important basis of the hierarchical structure of the fields, and reveals that positions in the field are not independent from spatial positions. Where the parents and schools are located in the city has an important effect on their positions in the field.

Where the parents are located with respect to the geographical distribution of educational resources, so their distance to the educational provision unevenly distributed across the city is also a component of the third axis that connect the space to the field. Residential location of the parents is significant in terms of proximity to “rare and desirable” (popular schools), with reference to Bourdieu. Where the parents are located in “socially ranked geographical space” is also significant for their ability to move. As stated, Bourdieu underlines the role of physical space in providing social distance and excluding the undesirable, and this is actualized through capital possessed. On the other hand, lack of capital “chains one to a place”:

Those who are deprived of capital are either physically or symbolically held at a distance from goods that are the rarest socially; they are forced to stick with the most undesirable and the least rare persons or goods. The lack of capital intensifies the experience of finitude: it chains one to a place (Bourdieu, 1999, p. 127).

“Chaining to place” which is used to represent how a social position with lack of capitals expresses into an inferior spatial position is directly used by Reay and Lucey (2003) to identify the schooling experience of working-class children. While their middle-class counterparts with sufficient resources that provide them ability to overcome the restriction of distance can escape, they have to attend the “demonized” schools close to their home.

As I will discuss in Chapter 5, in the cases of popular schools, families who live close to these kinds of schools are privileged, but the spatial component is not simply related with physical distance in static terms. Families, despite their distance, send their children to remote schools bypassing the school placement regulations. Thus, not only living in but also accessing to a particular location are effective on access to better quality education. In other words, in addition to the finding of most of the studies based on the examples of western counterparts in the literature that where you live is the main determinant of good education, how far you can go, in other words how far you can reach is equally important for the parents.

Here, the third axis appears and the spatial dynamic manifest itself in the ability to move which is highly related with capitals parents possess and their residential location, but also which can be evaluated separately. This carries us to the concept of spatial capital as ability and resource. Barthou and Monfroy (2010) use spatial capital to express the ability to avoid/overcome the experience of “chaining to space”. The idea that residential location as position capital, and space that the individual engages through a range of mobilities as situation capital together form spatial capital is drawn from Bourdieu’s idea of profits of localization. While in Bourdieu “spatial profits” are dependent upon economic, cultural and social capitals, they regard spatial profits as a distinct type of capital which is unequally possessed by families and differentiates schooling practices in relation to other types of capitals.

In the cases of popular schools, it is appropriate to take residential location of the parents (position capital) which is related to a place and their ability to manage/overcome distance through mobilities (situation capital) which is related to an area, as separate forms of capital due to their additional effect on the ability to access to the schools. Spatial distance they can engage through mobilities restricts or enables to access to the knowledge about the educational provision, more specifically about the schools that is significant for their school decisions and strategies. Residential location together with the space they engage through daily spatial mobilities significantly determine the parents’ access to the popular schools, and the variety between the two groups of parents regarding these two forms of capitals constitutes an important line of differentiation in their strategies.

As the fourth axis, spatiality also appears in the perceptions of the parents, teachers and school principals. As stated above, through the objectification in physical space, social divisions are converted into the subjective representation, in other words, retranslation of social hierarchies into the perceptions and classifications of the agents is realized through the mediation of space. In that sense, the symbolic meaning of space constitutes another, the fourth axis that connect space to the fields. This shows that the struggle to access to the popular schools is also a symbolic struggle. As I will demonstrate in Chapter 5, social and educational classifications

and distinctions that drive the actions and strategies of the actors comes with their spatial counterparts; the perceptions of teachers about parents and students have strong spatial references, the parents' perceptions about schools, students and other parents are highly spatial as well as social. The symbolic meaning of space operates with the logic of exclusion/inclusion, so is a constituent element of the production of closures. This means that field is formed and operates spatially, space is involved in both the objective structure and symbolic struggles in the field.

2.4.2. Exclusion, access and socio-spatial closure

As stated before, the strategies of the parents have strong social considerations and are exclusionary towards certain social groups, and rather than choice, the concept of exclusion is more appropriate to understand the relationship between the parents' strategies and educational inequalities. The strategies of the agents operate on the basis of social exclusion/inclusion, also they are rooted in an uneven educational and social structure. In that sense, exclusion is the key concept referring not only to the relationality between the strategies and practices of the actors, but also to the structural inequalities in terms of distribution of educational resources.

Access to the goods and services is at the center of the question of social exclusion (Madanipour et al., 1998) that is the main spatial basis of social exclusion. "The spatiality of social exclusion is constructed through the physical organization of space as well as through the social control of space, as ensured by informal codes and signs and formal rules and regulations" (Madanipour et al., 1998, p. 193). This means that access to quality education is a matter of spatial access as well, and determined by spatial distribution of schools and the school placement system which can be thought as social control of space by formal rules and regulations. However, bypassing these regulations by the parents and bending them by the school principals indicates that in practice, there are different patterns of access enabled by informal rules of social control over space that necessitates to focus on the practices of the agents.

As I will show in Chapter 5, the cases of popular schools are good examples to indicate that school differentiation is not a reflection of residential segregation, but produced through the spatial accessibility dynamics that was mentioned in the context of daily spatial mobility of the parents before. To reveal the accessibility dynamics for these schools is crucial to find out the implicit rules and regularities that the fields of schools follow. Access to these schools is neither merely determined by the formal rules of placement regulations technically, nor refers to a neutral process of choice among equal options. This does not mean that access to these schools is independent from the school placement regulations. Residential address-based placement system within a geography of unevenly distributed educational provision turns into a component of structural inequalities operating unequally on the parents and schools in the schooling field. Popular schools express that placement regulations become a subject of negotiation and struggle between the parents and school principals. On the basis of this, the thesis argues that access to these schools is determined by informal rules generated by the internal dynamics of the schools. These dynamics are the products of the actors' mutual strategies and practices driven in relation to the structural inequalities which have a strong spatial basis in terms of uneven geographical distribution of educational supply and demand, and create further inequalities. In that sense, strategies and practices of the parents and school professionals in relation to the structural inequalities of the schooling field forms the internal dynamics of the schools, and to reveal the accessibility dynamics, requires examination of strategies and structural inequalities relationally.

As stated, exclusionary strategies and practices of the parents express their response to the inequalities stemming from the state and its policies. One of the bases of these inequalities is insufficient and unevenly distributed public educational resources. Therefore, the exclusionary strategies of the parents to access better quality education gain meaning in the context of competition for access to educational resources which are insufficient and unevenly distributed across the city. At this point, I employ the concept of closure borrowed from Parkin's theory of social closure, since competitive action for the purpose of access to the resources is at the center of the concept which also includes the notion of exclusion.

Theory of social closure is on the formation of social divisions. Parkin, who proposes that the conceptualization of social class with dual categories makes it difficult to analyze intra-class divisions, explains social divisions and inequalities with collective action. In this regard, he offers a non-structuralist, collective action-based understanding of class (Murphy, 1986). Social closure refers to competitive action with an aim to increase the gains in the distribution of resources. As Jackson states about the Parkin's concept of closure,

the important point is not to arrive at some agreed definition of what constitutes the 'dominant social group' but to discover how particular groups achieve positions of relative power, how they seek to maintain power by successfully dominating subordinate groups, and how those groups themselves contest their subordination (1989, p. 55).

In that sense, the concept of closure enriches relational understanding of the actors' strategies provided by the notion of field. Parkin defines social groups by their mode of social closure in the distributive struggle to access to resources, and identifies two different but reciprocal forms of action within the context of social closure; 1- strategies of exclusion adopted by the privileged or powerful social groups to control the access to resources restricting/limiting it to those in the subordinate positions, and 2- the strategies of solidarism as the collective responses of those excluded social groups (Parkin, 1974, p. 5). However, social closure is predominantly relied upon the strategies of exclusion since those who are excluded by the dominant groups adopt exclusionary strategies towards the less powerful social groups as well. This is conceptualized as "dual closure" which expresses the divisions and stratification within excluded groups; "those who are subject to exclusionary closure in turn exclude others who are less powerful than themselves" (Jackson, 1989, p. 54), and this explains how the social divisions are formed.

Strategies of exclusion are the predominant mode of closure in all stratified systems. Where the excluded in their turn also succeed in closing off access to remaining rewards and opportunities, so multiplying the number of substrata... (Parkin, 1979, p. 45).

The concept of social closure is very helpful to explain the relationality of exclusionary strategies of the parents, and to enrich the discussion on the divisions

within the middle classes in the field. For these reasons, I regard the exclusionary strategies and practices of the parents as social closure strategies, also claim that since their strategies of closure objectified in space and realized through the control over space they have strong spatial basis, and express socio-spatial closure. Exclusionary strategies and practices of the parents with responses from the school professionals form these schools as exclusive places, so internal dynamics of the schools as fields become a means for exclusion that ensure exclusivity.

Moreover, geographical positions of the parents and the schools are influential on the geographical scale of closure, and on the dynamics that produce it. Thus, while social closure which refers to the competitive actions and exclusionary strategies of the parents refers to the formation of the vertical divisions among the parents, socio-spatial closure refers to horizontal divisions, as well:

The parents I concentrate on from both of the schools are in between position in the field of schooling; while they cannot send their children to the prestigious well-known private schools which are at the top of the school hierarchy, they can avoid undesirable neighbourhood schools. Their strategies to access better quality education, or in other words, access to the educational resources realized through the exclusion of those lower classes. However, when we consider the spatial basis of social closure, contextualize the parents' strategies of social closure geographically as the strategies for access to the educational resources which are unevenly distributed over the city space, and consider the geographical positions of the parents and schools in this regard, it can be asserted that their closure strategies also form socio-spatial divisions horizontally. Through this conceptualization, the division between the two groups of parents in two popular schools can be grasped. Although these parents' social positions are close and the division between them and those in less powerful position formed by their strategies of social closure, intra-class divisions among these parents are formed by their strategies that differ according to their geographical positions with respect to the geographical distribution of schools, so by their strategies of socio-spatial closure.

CHAPTER 3

EDUCATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT: TURKEY

As I discussed in the previous chapters, formation of popular public schools which expresses creation of educational inequalities at school level is a multidimensional and multilayered phenomenon which requires a multi-level approach that includes policy, school and individual levels, with a spatial perspective since the spatial dimension cuts through all these levels. The notion of field allows to develop such an approach by revealing the relationality between them. Since the strategies and practices of the actors generated in relation to the structure of the field, educational structure which enables the actors' strategies that create educational inequalities within schools should be explored. The field specific understanding of structure inevitably requires to examine the education system and policies regarding the rules and distribution of educational resources that structure the field unequally. In other words, inequalities arise from the educational supply which enable exclusionary strategies of the actors should be explored. This means to contextualize the strategies of the actors institutionally. Institutionally contextualization of the strategies and practices of the school professionals as the actors of educational supply also requires to place the schools as the organizations of educational service delivery in institutional context, regarding their autonomy in the implementation of educational policies, and how they run. Through this, organizational context that enables the actors' exclusionary strategies in relation to the institutional context is also included in the analysis.

By this way, I intent to discuss how unequal structure of the field operates on the parents, especially on middle-class parents in order to reveal the interplay between the agents, and structural inequalities in my analysis of the cases of popular schools. In line with the context specific account of structure and integration of geographical

space with social space allowed by the notion of field, I integrate spatial dimension of educational inequalities through the geographical distribution of educational resources to the examination of the structural inequalities of education field in Turkey.

Within this theoretical framework informed by field, I will first focus on how education system and policies in Turkey have unequally structured the education field on the basis of distribution of educational resources and the main mechanisms that create educational inequalities. Then, I will concentrate on schools in organizational sense. Schools, in my theoretical framework can be regard as educational resources distributed by the state and targeted by the parents' competitive action to access, but at the same time they are organizations of service delivery and since I conceptualize them as fields (sub-fields) as well, their place in the institutional design of educational service delivery, their autonomy, rules that determine their operation have particular importance. Then lastly in this chapter, I will focus on the spatial inequalities in education system in line with my understanding that spatial dimension is inherent to the structure of the field on the basis of uneven geographical distribution of educational resources.

3.1. Distribution of educational resources: Structural roots of social closure

When we question the education system in Turkey in the context of the structural inequalities it creates, the first issue to investigate is the inequalities arise from the distribution of educational resources. In that sense, my assertion here is that in Turkey, educational structure formed by limited and unevenly distributed educational resources gives its competitive character which creates selectivity and school hierarchy. Limited and unevenly distributed public educational resources lead on the one hand private investments and expenditures to be supported by the state, on the other hand a need for limiting the access to the schools causing school selectivity and school hierarchy. These in return reinforce competition and hierarchical differentiation among the schools creating inequalities. Thus, competitiveness and school hierarchy are the structural features of the system which creates inequalities such that the recent reforms introduced with an intent to reduce exam-based

competition and quality differences among the schools, did not have an effect on reducing competition, as will be discussed below.

3.1.1. Question of limited resources and competition

Since the competitive character of the education system in Turkey has rooted in unequal structure of the field formed by limited and unevenly distributed educational resources that lead school selectivity and hierarchy which in return reinforce competition, social injustice in Turkish educational system is a longstanding issue that requires a historical perspective. This is important to understand why for example the parents' "informal choosing" has become a significant strategy, despite the fact that the school placement system has become more catchment-based in recent years.

There is a tendency in the studies on educational policies in Turkey to evaluate post-1980s as a separate period, in terms of educational inequalities, marking a transformation in education policies that is contextualized as neoliberalization (Polat, 2013; Sayılan, 2006). Besides the dramatic increase in the number of private schools of all levels of education, decrease in public expenditures and investments, spread of private instruction centers (*dershane*), increasing household spending on education etc., changes in curricula and finance of education (Soydan & Abali, 2014, p. 376) are the main issues referred in this regard. Post-2000s is also highlighted in terms of intensification of the influence of neoliberalization on educational policies under the rule of Justice and Development Party (JDP). For example, İnal (2012, p. 20) states that although a market-oriented approach towards education and regulation of education within the context of the fields of economy and technology had started before, the language of economics became dominant in education with the policies of JDP government in the post-2000s. This is apparent, for example, in the introduction of school management system based on performance or in the new curriculum which introduces students to neoliberal notions such as competition, marketing etc. that should be understood in line with the attempts to create workforce according to the needs of competition for the integration to the global economy (İnal, 2012, p. 23). What these studies on post-1980s period education policies in Turkey reveal is

the reflection of the neoliberal transformation experienced in the field of education globally on Turkey. The global character of neoliberal transformation in education is frequently highlighted by the scholars, Ball for example, points to the issue stating that

educational policies have a global agenda which manifests itself as the establishment of new modes of organization, governance and public education delivery etc. and proliferation of competition, choice, devolution, managerialism and performativity all over the world despite some nuances in different countries (2003, pp. 30-31).

A kind of global reform package led by global organizations such as World Bank and OECD is present in educational field which also brings about a new form of social relationships, norms and values. To evaluate changes in education policies of post-1980s in Turkey as neoliberalization parallel to these developments in the global educational field brings about a risk to evaluate the structural characteristics of education in Turkey, such as competitiveness and hierarchy reinforced by competition as the consequences of neoliberalization and specific to this period, so to neglect the continuity of the educational structure which has always been prone to create inequalities. Accordingly, what is argued at this point is that although intensified with post-1980s education policies, competitive character of the education system is not a consequence of neoliberalization of education in Turkey that also has significant nuances from the processes in the developed countries. In order to grasp the peculiar character of the education system in Turkey where educational inequalities have a certain continuity, essential features of education as a public policy field would be helpful, since this provides a general framework for the examination of different national contexts.

Bayırbağ (2015) who considers global agenda prioritizing pro-market education policies imposed upon countries in the post-1980s, argues that this does not bring about a smooth change in the education policies, rather it is a contradictory process due to the characteristics of educational policy field. Unlike other public policy fields, tensions and instability are constant in the field of education policy because of the large and heterogeneous demands of its client, and the complex ideological, social and political functions of the educational services. The degree of heterogeneity

of the demands, and significance of education for the political system and social justice are the dynamics to be looked in order to examine how economic crisis translate into policy changes in the field of education policy, so he opposes to the idea that the former directly translates into the latter in a deterministic way. The heterogeneity of its clients which manifests itself as selectivity problem, and its ideational dimension which is apparent as political dispute between the concerns of social (in)equality and national unity, give educational policy field a relative autonomy from the economic processes, and how these contradictions unfolded historically gives a peculiar character to educational policy context of a country.

In Turkey, the political dispute between the concerns of social (in)equality and national unity has never been resolved in favor of social (in)equality, in other words, history of education policy in Turkey witnesses that social justice concerns have never been the primary motivation behind the policy changes; it either remained secondary to the national integrity concerns, or it was out of consideration within the economic strategies of post-crisis decades of 1980s and 2000s that most negatively affected the field of education (Bayırbağ, 2015). On the other hand, the selectivity problem has appeared as the subordination of educational policies to other policy areas such as economic policies, or preference for a particular level of policy implementation unit within the educational policy which means partial solutions to the educational problems. This means that public resources devoted to education have always been limited.

Lack of social justice concerns and a comprehensive approach to the educational problems, together with limited public resources devoted to education forms a specific educational structure that is prone to create inequalities systematically. Post-1980s witness intensification of these inequalities, however the process has differences from that in developed countries. One of the most significant differences appears in the role of the state. As Ercan pointed, the transformation from the decisiveness of the state in education to the decisiveness of capital is a global process, but this transformation has been contradictory to the neoliberal arguments in Turkey; against the neoliberal emphasis on the diminishing role of the state, the transformation of education in Turkey has been directed by the state (Ercan, 1999,

pp. 25-26). The state has supported and provided incentives to the private sector in education. Contrary to the neoliberal principle of cutting public spending, the state's spending is supported in Turkey in order to provide private sector to invest in education (p. 34). For example, the most significant financial support was given by the state to improve the private schools (p. 33). An important reason behind the commodification of education in Turkey is insufficient public resources that cannot meet the demand for education so that private sector's provision of educational services is assumed to increase the limited educational supply (p. 31). Insufficient public educational resources which indicate specific solution of selectivity problem in Turkey in the direction of subordination of education policy to other policy areas and partial solutions to the educational problems is a longstanding issue and a significant reason behind the competitive character of educational structure which produces selectivity and school hierarchy.

3.1.2. Consequences of competition: Selectivity and school hierarchy

Competition among the public schools is not supported officially in Turkey. However, competition that is rooted in the limited educational supply that does not meet the demand, requires selective methods to limit the access to the public schools like central exams. In that sense, competition becomes visible through the central exams which create school hierarchies in return. Here, it should be asserted that although central examination for entrance to the schools reinforces competition, since it is not the reason of competition, the system tends to create informal selectivity and school hierarchies at all educational levels regardless of whether entrance to schools is exam-based or not as I will show through the cases of popular schools. However, competition which stems from the exam-centric placement system in Turkey, intensifies competition for access to the educational resources in all levels of education due to the fact that students' success in the central exams for entrance to the universities or high schools is heavily relied upon educational quality they receive in the primary and lower secondary education levels. Therefore, hierarchical differentiation among the schools spread to all educational levels, and this differentiation in turn makes access to quality education/prestigious schools more

competitive, especially for middle class families for whom social mobility function of education has a particular importance.

In the early years of the Republican period, the methods based on competence and selection for enrolment to the schools for which demand is high were adopted due to the limited capacity of middle and high schools because of limited public resources (Polat, 2009, p. 26). From those years on competitiveness and differentiation among the schools in a hierarchical way based on selectiveness in relation to the limited public resources has formed the basis of educational structure that prone to create inequalities. This has become clear after 1950s, despite the quantitative developments in education system i.e., the increasing number of schools. Nohl (2008) for example, points to the insufficiency of educational services after 1950s underlining the continuity with the previous period. He argues that “education system that had been ill equipped even at the time of the establishment of the Republic to provide basic education to the population, did not stand a chance in the face of this rapid population growth” (2008, p. 32) after 1950s. Although the schools were extended dramatically, they “could neither remedy the deficits dating back to the founding of the Republic, nor could they keep up with population growth” (Nohl, 2008, pp. 32-33). Similarly, Şimşek and Yıldırım (2004) underline the problem of educational quality due to the dramatic increase in the classroom size as a result of migration from rural to urban areas in Turkey in 1950s. As they state, “schools were expected to provide education for the children who had migrated to the cities, to acclimate them to urban life and to their urban peer group” (2004, p. 154). However, they suffered from poor quality and resources and could not meet the increasing demand as a result of rapid “demographic transition from rural to urban areas” (2004, p. 154). In 1960s the quality of education continues to be a serious problem, the most basic indicator of which was that the number of students in the classrooms that reached almost three times more than the designed number due to the lack of financial resources which hindered the construction of new schools.

To sum, education system in Turkey was far from providing quality education for all even before the neoliberal policy reforms, and from those years on there has been a discrepancy between demand and supply which also have a strong spatial expression,

for example as the number of schools in urban and rural areas incompatible with demand (see, Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2004). Since the educational resources have been scarce, the basic mechanism that determines access to quality education has been competition, which is objectified in the exam-centric character of the education system. Selection through the examination has been an important reason of the stratified schooling system in Turkey.

The first examples of selective high schools which accept students based on examination, Maarif Colleges (*Maarif Kolejleri*) were founded in 1956, and they took the name of Anatolian High School (*Anadolu Lisesi*) in 1973 (Polat, 2009, p. 26). Rutz and Balkan highlight the position of these selective high schools in the hierarchical schooling structure and their role in social differentiation. They state that since the 1950s, “declining quality in public schools and increasingly difficult access to quality public education has become the main education issue” (Rutz & Balkan, 2009, pp. 43-44). Against the low quality of the general high schools, Anatolian high schools are established in the face of increasing demand of particular segments of middle-class families for university education, and they are intended to provide middle class quality education comparable to the private schools (2009, p. 50), so “this new type of elite schools have significant implications for social differentiation within middle-classes” (p. 44). Social differentiation through education gains a more selective character with the introduction of university entrance examination in 1974, and the competition becomes ferocious in the following years. Introduction of entrance examination for middle schools in 1983 (Selective Middle Schools Examination, SMES) shows the need to regulate the competition as a result of increasing demand for quality education in middle schools (see, Rutz & Balkan, 2009). At the same time, private schools are supported by the state in order to meet the demands of new middle-class families. The system which is based on the state’s regulation of schools’ selection and families’ preferences operates creating school hierarchies regarding quality of education along with social differentiations.

As mentioned, competitiveness based on central examination to enter both universities and high schools, and segregated schooling structure mutually reinforce each other. While the central exams create school hierarchies regarding educational

quality and academic success, limited place in top schools within this hierarchy reinforces competition. Central examination is connected to school segregation in two related ways; one is through the different school types, and two is through the socio-economic characteristics of students and parents, and the studies show that these two often overlaps. In a recent report for example, it is highlighted that the students from high income families tend to cluster in the most prestigious schools in Turkey, and it is stated that “the practice of grouping students by ability accentuates social and educational disparities, with the most prestigious schools attracting students that are both high performers and come from the most advantageous backgrounds” (Kitchen et al., 2019, p. 73). School segregation regarding academic achievement and socio-economic status indicates that there is a strong school effect in education system in Turkey. For example, a study on educational inequalities in Turkey (Ataç, 2017), demonstrates that there is a strong relationship between educational inequalities and school types in Turkey, and we can speak of the existence of school segregation. According to the PISA results from 2012, Turkey is the fourth country after Netherlands, Hungary and Belgium, among OECD countries, that have the highest inter-school differentiations. According to this ranking, in Northern countries such as Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark these differences are the lowest level, meaning that “whichever schools parents in these countries send their children to, they are able to achieve similar success results” (Ataç, 2017, p. 70). On the other hand, according to the same results, Turkey is the second country with the lowest achievement differences within schools. This means that “the fact that educational achievement within schools is mostly similar yet displays major differences among schools is an actual example of school segregation” (2017, p. 70). Thus, according to these results, there is a strong school effect on the achievement of children in Turkey. “Which school a student in Turkey attends makes a 62% change in that student’s success, and that the same rate for OECD countries on the average is merely 37%” (Ataç, 2017, p. 71). 2018 PISA results also support the existence of school effect in the education system of Turkey. In the report, Turkey is mentioned among the countries which have strong inter-school variation in performance and success due to the stratification and selection, so the features of the schooling system. Turkey is placed among the countries with educational systems where low performers are more often concentrated in specific schools or types of schools, along

with countries such as Germany, Hungary, Israel, Lebanon, the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic (OECD, 2019a). Similarly, in the national report of Action for Reducing Inequalities in Education (ARISE) it is underlined that “students from different socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to attend the same schools, as a result, schools are segregated according to students’ socioeconomic status and academic achievement” (Kesbiç, 2021, p. 12).

A significant reason behind the school segregation regarding academic achievement and socio-economic status is the private tutoring, in a more general sense, the weight of private expenditures in educational system that is fed by the competition for quality education/prestigious schools. Examination centered education system in Turkey has long been relied upon private expenditures that is most clearly captured in the extensiveness of the private instruction centers (*dershane*). As Somel (2019, p. 17) states; “The exam triggers fierce competition because of the high school hierarchy and the limited number of places at top schools”, and private instruction centers or tutors are the significantly provides advantage in the competition for prestigious schools that depends on the economic resources the families have, which in return increases the reliance of academic success on socio-economic status. The extension of private instruction centers is a concomitant result of the dependency of education system on competitive exams due to the deficiencies of instruction and resources in public schools (Soydan & Abali, 2014), and forms a crucial dimension of injustices, by increasing the effect of the socio-economic background on students’ academic achievement. Inadequate number of schools, large class sizes, insufficient public educational expenditures can be cited among the reasons of high demand for private tutoring including private instruction centers (Tansel, 2006). These private instruction centers were abolished in 2015, but the statistics have shown that the education system in Turkey continues to rely heavily on private expenditures, and more specifically the demand for private courses and tutoring continues to be very high (Eğitim Reformu Girişimi [ERG], 2020).

As seen, insufficient supply that cannot meet the demand requires restricting entrance to the public schools by selective central exams, apart from directing the demand to private schools. To the extent that this creates school hierarchy, and

contributes to the uneven distribution of resources makes access to the schools at the top of the hierarchy more competitive, especially for the middle class parents who stay in the public education sector. On the other hand, intervention in placement system in order to reduce competition and quality differences among the schools has frequently been needed. In that sense, the next section focuses on the recent changes in high school placement system with an aim to demonstrate not only the direction exam-based competition has changed towards, but also the changing spatial dynamics of competition.

3.1.3. The recent changes in the formal rules of access to high schools

Education system in Turkey has long relied on examination for transition to upper levels of education as stated, and by the academic year 1995–1996, all the high schools, except general high schools, were accepting students based on their scores in the centrally implemented exams (Caner & Bayhan, 2020). Examination system has long been a hot topic in Turkey, and numerous changes in the transition exams show that it has become more controversial in the last decades. If we focus on the transition to secondary education within the scope of the thesis; it is seen that the system has changed five times in the last 17 years (Table 1). With these changes, the placement system has become increasingly competitive. While the rate of high schools accepted students according to exam score was 2% in 1990s, the rate increased to 20% in 2010, to %36 in 2012, to %50 in 2013 and to %100 in 2014 (Çelik, 2015, p. 276). It is stated that “the high school education system has become more hierarchical than ever before with the change introduced in 2014 that made placement for all high schools exam-based” (Çelik, 2015, p. 284).

Table 1: High school placement systems
Source: Caner and Bayhan, 2020

| Placement system | Year | Sat by | Type of schools |
|----------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| High School Entrance Examination | 1997-2004 | 8th graders (Final year of the primary education) | Selective enrollment schools |

Table 1 (continued)

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Selection and Placement Examination for Secondary Education | 2005-2008 | 8th graders | Selective enrollment schools |
| Level Assessment Examination | 2007/2008–2010 & 2011 | 6th, 7th, 8th graders | Selective enrollment schools |
| Level Assessment Examination | 2011-2013 | 8th graders | Selective enrollment schools |
| Transition from Basic to Secondary Education | 2014-2017 | 8th graders | All schools in the country |
| System for High School Admission | 2017/2018 - present | 8th graders | About 10% of the schools designated by the state as selective schools |

With the last change implemented by the 2017-2018 academic year on the other hand, replacing the Transition from Basic to Secondary Education Examination (TBSE-TEOG) which was introduced in 2014 and made enrollment for all public high schools exam-based, the Ministry intends to reduce exam-based competition. The new system, System for High School Admission (SHSA-LGS), designated only 10% of all high schools as selective schools which accept students according to the exam score. The other high schools were designated as catchment-based schools. The primary purpose of the last change which decreased the number of selective high schools is to limit the weight of the extracurricular activities, especially for exam preparation, and resources outside the school which had increased with the highly competitive nature of the previous system due to the fact that admission to all public high schools were exam based.

The last change in the high school placement system indicates the need to regulate competition, but contrary to what was intended by the Ministry, this regulation had no effect on the reduction of competition. The majority of students continued to take the exam for the enrolment to prestigious selective high schools which constitute only %10 of all high schools after the change. Since 2018 there has been no any significant change in the rates of participation in central exam, and the participation rates have continued to be very high contrary to what was intended by the policy makers (MEB, 2018; 2019b; 2020a; 2021a; 2022).

Based on the high participation rates, it can be asserted that rather than to eliminate, the last change in high school placement system has increased competition since the number of selective high schools has decreased without a significant decrease in demand for central exam. Similar evaluation is made by Caner and Bayhan (2020) who argue that the effect of change towards a more catchment-based high school placement system on educational inequalities is better understood by taking into account its relationship with school conversions between 2010 and 2013. During these years, the general high schools which provided instruction for university preparation and accepted students based on their residential addresses were converted into university preparation (Anatolian) high schools, vocational high schools and (religious) Imam Hatip high schools with an aim to reduce quality differences among schools and school types, also to promote the vocational education (Caner & Bayhan, 2020, p. 5). However, as argued by Caner and Bayhan, the studies have shown that abolishment of general high schools combined with the introduction of TBSE (TEOG) in 2014 has increased the demand for private schools especially among the secular middle-class families who demand for university preparation instruction for their children. In that sense, it is not a coincidence that the rate of private schools has increased significantly since 2014 (Figure 1).

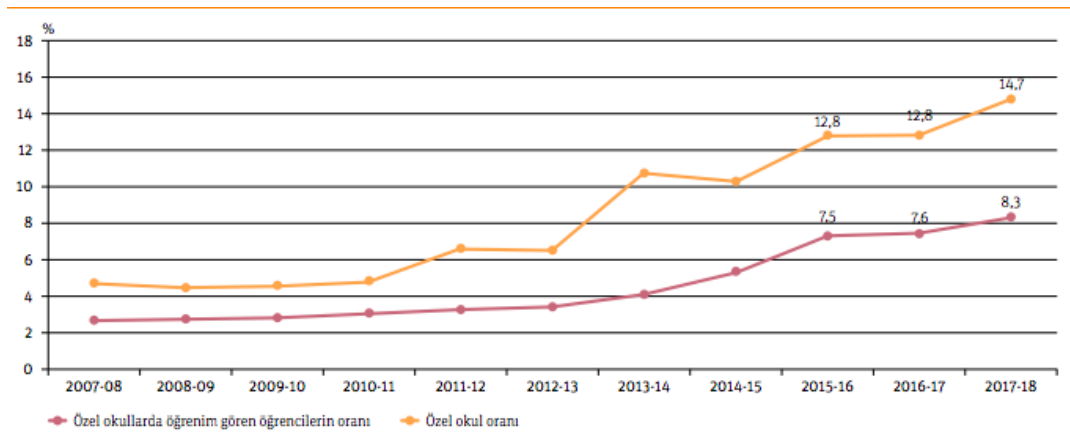


Figure 1: Rate of private schools and private school students
Source: ERG, 2018

Moreover, the private instruction centers were converted into private high schools (Basic High Schools) in 2015-2016, but continued to provide exam-based

instruction. They attract families who want to receive exam preparation instruction and avoid İmam Hatip high schools and vocational schools in this regard because of lower fees for these schools compared to other, well-established private schools (Caner & Bayhan, 2020, p. 5). Thus, abolishment of *dershanes* without any change towards diminishing the roots of competitiveness and school hierarchy does not weaken the correlation between socio-economic prosperity and academic success, rather it proceeds in another form.

Therefore, decreasing the number of high schools which provided exam preparation instruction for tertiary education, while increasing the weight of religious and vocational high schools can be evaluated as an important reason behind the high demand for private schools since 2014. It is obvious that these changes more negatively affected the low-income families who cannot afford private schools, so cannot exit from the public education system. Despite the clear evidence of increasing demand for university preparation high schools in these years the increasing percentages of İmam Hatip high schools and vocational high school students (Caner & Bayhan, 2020, p. 6) indicates that a great proportion of those low-income families had to send their children to vocational or religious high schools which have a poor performance in the university entrance exam (OECD, 2020).

The change towards a more catchment-based placement system introduced in 2018 (LGS), with the absence of general high schools which provided academic instruction means that students who want university preparation instruction have to take the central exam for the selective high schools which constitute only %10 of all high schools after the change. Therefore, with the current system which have increased the weight of address-based placement, the families who demand for secular education and university preparation instruction, have become more reliant on the examination, and since the selective high schools were diminished, the examination-based competition has become fiercer for those families. Caner and Bayhan (2020, p. 6) express this situation as follows:

As evidenced by the high proportion of students taking the high school placement test, the SHSA did not end the test-orientedness or the competition for selective high schools, in contrast to what was promised by the ministers.

In practice, it turned out to be a return to the pre-TBSE era in the absence of catchment-based neighborhood public schools, which all offered college preparation instruction

Based on all these developments in the last decade, firstly, it can be asserted that rather than the placement regulations, the main reason of the competitiveness in the education system is the limited educational resources that cannot meet the demand. This is why the rates of participation in the exams continues to be high despite the decrease in the weight of high schools that admit students according to the central exam. This demonstrates that the demand for prestigious selective schools is high, and enrolment to these schools has become increasingly difficult. Secondly, increasing demand for private schools indicates both families' increasing demand for quality education and the insufficiency of public investments to meet this demand. In that sense, especially for the middle classes who stay in the public education system but whose social mobility is heavily reliant upon a good higher education in Turkey, the competition for access to prestigious selective high schools has increased. I will demonstrate the increasing competition for better quality education through the increase in the number of private schools while public investments remain constant in Ankara context.

When we take the educational structure formed by limited and unevenly distributed educational resources as the main reason of the competitiveness, and assert that the competition has increased with the recent changes, it is possible to make evaluation on the spatial dynamics of school placement beyond what was designated by the regulations. Although the last change in high school placement system designates a more catchment-based placement, the demand for selective high schools remains high as stated. Decreasing number of these schools also indicates a more uneven geographical distribution. It can be asserted that with the increasing competition for prestigious schools, the pressure for spatial mobility for improving their access to better quality schools on the families has increased. In that sense, rather than the formal regulations on school placement, it is the geographical distribution of educational resources that determines the spatial dynamics of competitive action for access to the prestigious schools. This implies that even if the formal rules change, field of education where the competition has increased recently tends to follow

informal rules due to the uneven structure formed by limited and unevenly distributed educational resources. This is also valid for the middle schools. Rather than the formal regulation on school placement which is residential address-based, the spatial dynamics of the competitive action of the middle-class parents for access to prestigious middle schools will be investigated through the informal rules of access. Now, I will focus on the middle schools in Turkey within the context of increased competition, also school hierarchy. Before that it should be underlined that although placement to middle schools is catchment-based, they are not free from the competitiveness and its consequences of school hierarchy and selectivity. This is the case both because they operate in the same unequal educational structure, and because exam-related competition permeates all levels of education in Turkey.

3.1.4. Middle schools and educational quality differences

For the middle schools, it is difficult to talk about school type differences as in high schools, since there is no school type distinction at middle school level. However, it can be stated that opening of İmam Hatip schools at middle school level with the regulation that extended compulsory education to twelve years in 2012 contributed to the inequalities arising from different school types at the middle school level. It is seen in the reports of the Ministry on the results of the high school entrance exams that the rate of graduates from these middle schools to be placed in prestigious high schools is quite low compared to the students who graduated from general middle schools (MEB, 2020b; 2021b). As at the high school level, these schools are avoided by the middle-class families who demand for secular education and exam preparation instruction. In that sense, their effect on the parents' competitive action not only for access to the prestigious schools but also to avoid the schools with poor performance in the exam cannot be ignored.

In line with the relationship between competition and uneven distribution of educational resources by the state how to approach quality differences among middle schools gain importance. Here, the claim is that the examination of school differentiation regarding educational quality at middle-school level should consider the inequalities in educational supply as well as the socio-economic inequalities

among students and families. Considering distribution of public educational investments allows to deal with educational inequalities regarding educational quality differences among the schools going beyond the public-private school distinction.

Studies show that concerns with educational inequalities and social justice in education have long paid attention to the quantitative indicators of education such as the schooling rates in Turkey, but during the 2000s as education system included more children at all levels of education, and the rates of participation in education increased, the main problem regarding (in)equality and social (in)justice has become quality differences in education (Kondakçı & Sivri, 2014; Köselci, 2015). Although schooling rate is still low in higher education when compared to the OECD countries, the rates of participation in education at all levels of education have been increased in Turkey, indicating that “Turkey has been improving its quantitative capacity in education” (Kondakçı, 2020, p. 312). This allows to the argument that rather than access to education, “the central issue regarding social justice in education in Turkey seems to related to the quality of education” (Kondakçı, 2020, p. 316), or put it another way, the central issue is access to quality education. Similarly, Somel states that with the extension of compulsory education to eight years in 1997 and in 2012 to 12 (4 + 4 + 4) years, schooling rates have increased for the primary, middle school and high school levels but “the neoliberal education policies of the post-1980 era, especially the school finance and teacher employment policies, created an environment that increases inequalities in terms of the quality of education among the schools” (2019, p. 26).

The impact of neoliberal education policies which bring about further commercialization of education and decentralization of education finance to the household level in recent decades on the inequalities regarding quality of education among the schools is obvious. Although public investments increase in the post-1980s, the share of educational investments decreases considerably, and this is also valid for the post-2000s period when we face with a constant decline of the share of education in total social policy expenditures (Bayırbağ, 2015, p. 69). In response to this, private expenditures in education have increased significantly which can be

grasped with the increasing household expenditure on education and increasing proportion of private schools which is dated back to 1990s, but striking in recent years (see, ERG, 2017).

As shown in a recent report by OECD (2020), Turkey is the country with the highest level of private spending on schools among the OECD countries. While the private funds account for up to 40% of school budgets, a significant part of these private funds belongs to households (2020, p. 54). One of the significant reasons of high household spending is the model of school finance that will be discussed in the following section regarding its impact on the school segregation. However, another reason behind the household spending on education is the centrality of the exams. The percentage of household spending in education has been increasing since 2011, and according to the 2018 data, it has reached 20% (ERG, 2020, p. 42). As shown in the figure below (Figure 2), the rate of household spending varies by different educational levels and the source of the increase in the last decade is the household expenditures at middle and high school levels. The common aspect of these two levels is students' preparation for the central exams for transition to upper educational levels. This indicates that a significant proportion of household spending is related with private courses and tutoring for exam preparation. Moreover, it demonstrates that exam-related competition is also very high at middle-school level.

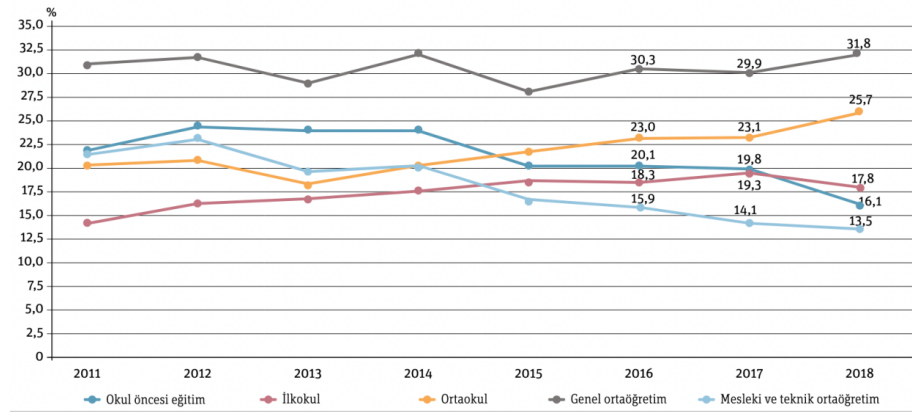


Figure 2: Rates of household spending on education by educational level (%)
Source: ERG, 2020

What is apparent is that with the further diminishment of public investments in public education accompanied by the increasing private investments and spending,

the selective, quality public schools become the target for the families who demand quality education in the public education sector for their children, and this is valid in middle school education as well. While selectiveness in the high school education is based upon formal methods, like examination, the absence of examination for the middle schools does not mean that they are free from selectivity; for the middle schools, selection occurs through informal mechanisms as I will show in Chapter 5, since the extent of competitiveness in the education system in Turkey spreads to all levels of education.

Competition that basically takes place around scarce resources in the public education is fierce and prone to create inequalities especially given the lack of policies concerning social (in)equality. The recent changes in the examination system together with school conversions have intensified those inequalities. However, a more comprehensive and long-term approach that addresses school differentiation as a product of a long-standing competitive and hierarchical educational structure of a highly centralized and exam-centric education system, provides to see that not only the lack of state investments or diminishing public expenditures on education, but also the investments themselves, distribution of state's educational investments and expenditures have significant impact on the educational inequalities in terms of quality differences among the public schools. In that regard, "pilot school" implementation in Turkish education system provides a good illustration for the direct impact of the state's investments on the school differentiation.

Declarations of pilot schools is an implementation that has been widely practiced for many years in the education system of Turkey. It is a method for the gradual implementation of reforms, new policies or projects by selecting specific schools. Certain schools are selected and declared as pilot schools, as the schools where the changes will be attempted firstly. The resources transferred to the schools according to the subject of the reform or the project to be implemented are the factor that differentiates the pilot schools from other schools. In other words, these schools are selected schools where state investments are directed, and in this context, they differ from other schools. As will be seen in the cases of popular schools, this often causes

pilot schools to be perceived as successful, gives them prestige that paves the way for popularity among the parents.

Pilot school implementation is significant in terms of where the investments are directed geographically, and in this respect, it plays an important role in the uneven geographical distribution of public educational investments. Thus, pilot school implementation in Turkey indicates that not only the insufficiency of public investments on education, but also the distribution of investments on public education has a role in competitiveness and creation of educational inequalities. Moreover, this has a strong spatial basis, since the locational decisions of public educational investments form a geography of unevenly distributed educational supply. As I will show in the next chapters, the schools I selected for the case study are this kind of public schools. They are the public schools selected by the state for pilot implementations or established with a special purpose, and as I will discuss, this is very effective on high demand they received distinguishing among other public schools.

So far, I have argued that limited and unevenly distributed educational resources unevenly structure the educational field in Turkey. This creates intense competition to access resources. Since limited supply requires to regulate demand through competitive central exams, competitive educational structure is reproduced creating selective schools and school hierarchies. In this context, policy changes aimed at reducing the weight of the exam and competition had no effect. On the contrary, competition to access better quality education has increased in the last decade, as evidenced by the rise of private expenditures and investments on education, which indicates increased demand for better quality education. This is especially the case for the middle class families who stay in the public education system. Here, what should be underlined is that since the middle schools operate in the same unequal educational structure, also exam-related competition starts from primary school level, competition for access to quality education/prestigious schools is also intense at the level of middle school education. In that sense, especially pilot schools where the state investments are directed, with the prestige this provide come to the fore. They become the schools where the demand of families in their search for better

quality education is concentrated. High demand that exceeds the schools' capacity generates school selectivity just as it is at the upper educational levels, but differently, it is based on informal methods. Now, I will focus on the organizational roots of this “informal selectivity” in the following section.

3.2. Institutional design of educational service delivery: Background of gatekeepers

Although in a highly centralized education system in Turkey school principals are mainly characterized as passive implementers of centrally designed education policies who have little autonomy provided legally, they are the key actors and “de facto authorities” due to their role in mediation between the top-down policies and the parents. This is the basis of further argument in the thesis that access to quality education in a highly centralized education system in Turkey is paradoxically determined at school level through the informal mechanisms that contribute to the creation of further inequalities.

3.2.1. Autonomy of school principals: Between top-down policies and bottom-up demands

Education system in Turkey has always been centralized in that implementation of policies; curriculum, textbooks, budget, personnel, assessment are all determined centrally by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), and it is one of “the most centralized systems among the OECD countries” (Kitchen et al., 2019, p. 49). In 1924, right after the foundation of the Republic, the Law on the Unity of Education which abolished the organization of schooling based on the operation of schools independently in the Ottoman period, and placed all educational institutions under the control of MoNE is introduced. The Law provides the basis for highly centralized national education system that continues to define the contemporary education system in Turkey (Koşar-Altınyelken et al., 2015, p. 474).

The Figure 3 compares Turkey and OECD averages in terms of percentage of decisions taken at different levels of government for public middle schools considering four domains of decision-making: 1- Organization of instruction, 2- Personnel management, 3- Planning and structures, 4- Resources. It shows that in Turkey the percentage of decisions made at school level is much lower than the OECD average, and well below the percentage of decisions taken at central level. While the 73% of decisions made by the central government, only 8% of decisions made by the schools. The OECD averages are 24% for central governments and 34% for schools (OECD, 2020, p. 17).

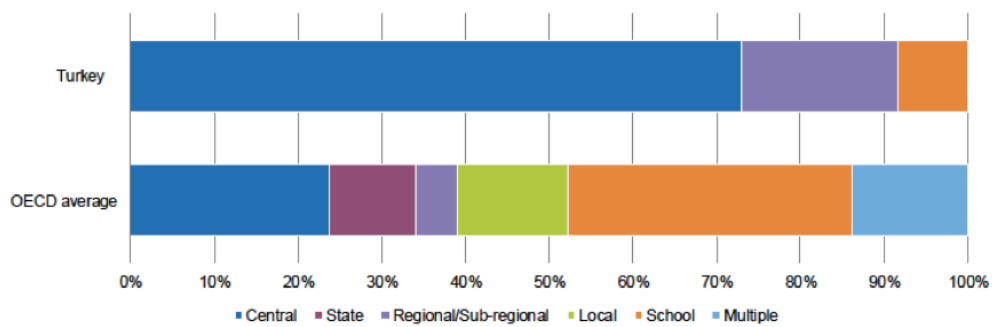


Figure 3: Percentage of decisions taken at each level of government for public middle schools (2017)
Source: OECD, 2020

However, studies reveal that general operation and characteristics of the education system in Turkey makes the personal values and dispositions of the school principals crucial in the daily operation of the schools, and the gap between the legal regulations and the real educational problems in practice makes school principals “de facto authority” to address and solve these problems (Kondakçı et al., 2016; Kondakçı & Beycioğlu, 2020; Arar et al., 2019). In that sense, especially two features of the education system can be pointed; 1- The centralized structure of the educational system itself, and 2- The lack of comprehensiveness in educational policies which manifests itself as partial solutions to the educational problems.

In a highly centralized education system, the school principals are given little autonomy in most of the tasks, also their participation in the policy-making process in education is very low. “Despite their critical role in realizing the large-scale

changes, they have limited authority over the resources necessary for the attainment of these changes” (Kondakçı et al., 2019, p. 4), but despite their limited autonomy, they have room for acting autonomously which is rooted in their key role of mediation between top-down, centrally designed policies and daily operation of the schools, the relationship between which can best be described with discrepancy in education system in Turkey.

They carry out change; and shape the final state of it. This implicitly suggests that no matter how a change is planned or designed at the top, implementation at the bottom will never meet the designed form because of the difference between the original design and the local realities of schools. Therefore, some of the participants (principals) claimed that they have the authority to define their own change implementation strategy (Kondakçı et al., 2019, p. 12).

In relation to the discrepancy or gap between the realities and designed policies stemming from the centralized structure of the education system, the lack of a comprehensive approach to the educational problems which requires long-term planning and complementary policies with a clear implementation plan in Turkey forces the principals to find their own ways of implementation. Kondakçı and his colleagues in their study (Kondakçı et al., 2019) on the school principals’ perceptions and practices of policy changes focusing on the period between 2012 – 2016 that was a period witnessed various educational reforms, reveals firstly that the frequent changes in educational system in Turkey and their irrelevancy, and incoordination leads the principals to question the motivation behind the changes, and being reluctant for implementation of the policies or reforms. Since the changes are designed without detailed analysis of the real problems by the central authority and without participation of the principals, there appears gaps between policies and the real problems faced within the schools. As a result, implementation of changes and reforms becomes heavily relied upon the capacity and “management skills” of the principals and their active effort to find their own implementation methods.

the principals expressed various methods of mediating change. Their methods can be grouped into managing the school environment, managing human side of change and managing self. Managing the environment includes strategies

such as networking with other principals, generating resources, conducting short-term planning and creating necessary conditions for implementation (Kondakçı et al., 2019, p. 10).

Divergence of educational policies designed by the central authorities from the “local realities of schools” manifests itself in the legislation gaps, as well in relation to the problem of lack of comprehensiveness, and partial solutions to the educational problems. An important issue for the thesis in that sense, which was discussed in the first section of the chapter is social justice. As stated before, social justice concerns have never been the primary motivation behind the policy changes; it either remained secondary to the national integrity concerns, or it was out of consideration within the economic strategies of post-crisis decades of 1980s and 2000s (Bayırbağ, 2015).

Studies show that weakness in legal bases of social justice in Turkish education system makes the school principals de facto authority to deal with social justice issues in the schools (Kondakçı & Beycioğlu, 2020, p. 318). It is stated that “particularly lack of sound and comprehensive policy to ensure socially just educational practices leads broadening the role of social justice leadership to cover the teachers as well” (Kondakçı & Beycioğlu, 2020, p. 319). In that sense, ensuring social justice in education system in Turkey becomes a “personal endeavor” of principals and teachers. Arar et al. (2016) in their comparative study on educational leadership for social justice find that contrary to the school principals in many Western countries whose educational policies have reference to social justice, “school principals in Turkey act individually and locally” (2016, p. 13), and rather than being driven by any formal policy, their social justice practices are driven by personal endeavor. What this peculiarity in Turkish education system suggests is that personal values, dispositions, perception of social justice of each principal become crucial in the implementation of policies and operation of the schools. In the absence of a standard regulations and understanding of social justice rooted in legal regulations, every school have a potential to be a unique case to be investigated regarding the creation of further inequalities at the school level by the practices and strategies of school principals and the parents relationally.

3.2.2. School finance: Means of informal school selectivity

Although autonomy of school principals in practice mainly arises from the highly centralized structure of the education system, finance of the schools is one of the most significant tasks to focus in the search for their autonomy in practice.

It is stated in the recent reports (OECD, 2020; Kitchen et al, 2019) that despite the attempts to decentralize the administration of education presented in the action plans, “it has taken a form of moving authority to the provincial directorates of the ministry, rather than the delegation of more responsibility to local governments or schools” (Kitchen et al., 2019, pp. 49-50). One of the supports of this claim is the school principals’ reports on their autonomy for various tasks such as determining curriculum, assessment practices, managing financial resources. However, it is highlighted in the report that schools have a chance to create their own financial resources via school-parent associations and to use them for their own purposes:

Schools have less autonomy for managing human and financial resources than in most other OECD countries. For example, schools have limited flexibility in how they use public funds and few responsibilities in teacher selection and career management. However, schools can use the funds raised locally by their school-parent associations, mainly from parents and local businesses, to support their own priorities and initiatives (Kitchen et al., 2019, p. 52)

This statement reveals the fact that changes towards decentralization of administration of education in Turkey have mostly resulted in increasing responsibility for fundraising that should be thought with decrease in the share of public educational expenditures and investments. In this context, school-based management as one of the most apparent steps towards decentralization in educational system and its important component, school-based funding gain significance.

As stated before, the share of household spending on education has increased especially after the 2000s. A significant facilitator of this increase is school-based funding which heavily relies upon the financial contribution of parents to school

budgets. With the adaptation of school-based funding within the scope of school-based management, 2000s marks a transition from centrally designed privatization of education finance through a national charity organization (Milli Eğitim Vakfı) in 1980s (Bayırbağ, 2015, p. 77). School-based management which is a part of the decentralization strategy of World Bank applied in many developing countries aims to transfer finance of education to school level and families (Keskin, 2008). In accordance with this change, with the School Parent Association Regulation issued in 2005 and replaced 1983 Regulation, school-parent associations are allowed to “accept donations; organize social and cultural events and campaigns; run the canteens, open spaces and saloons” (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Okul-Aile Birliği, 2005). With the Regulation the task of providing fund is left to school-parent associations. Although the Regulation issued in 2012 replacing 2005 Regulation ends to run “open spaces and saloons” (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Okul-Aile Birliği, 2012), funding the schools is still the task of the school-parents associations.

Moreover, the regulation prohibits school-parent associations from collecting donations during the registration period with the statement: “Associations cannot force parents for donations under any circumstances, nor can they collect donations and aid during the school registration period” (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Okul-Aile Birliği, 2012), but as will be revealed in the fifth chapter, in practice, donations of families remain to be important resources of school budgets, particularly of the budgets of the popular schools. Although according to the regulation school-parent associations have duties such as collaboration with school administrations, teachers and parents, supporting education, the function of providing financial resources to the schools precedes these duties in practice due to the school-based funding instead of the ministry’s directly provide resources that the schools need (Akbaşlı & Tura, 2019).

According to Keskin (2008), the significant impact of school-based management has been transforming the school principals into managers, and the schools into managements. As mentioned, decentralization attempts have been mostly towards fundraising for the schools in the context of decreasing public investments. This means suffering from lack of resources for most of the schools, and seeking for

alternative resources for the principals by using “entrepreneurial”, “communicative” and “persuasive” skills to provide the financial support (Erdem, 2019, p. 802).

Although donations and dues collected from parents directly or indirectly via school parent association constitute an important part of resources along with the resources allocated from public budget for the schools’ finance in practice, the parents are not obliged to make financial contributions to the schools since the compulsory education in public schools is free (Erdem, 2019). This is why the personal skills of the principals is significant for the operation of the schools. Besides personal skills, “political skills” of the principals such as “networking ability” and “interpersonal influence” are also crucial for the management of the schools’ finance (Altunay, 2019). Altunay in her study, points to the discrepancy between the regulations and the practice regarding schools’ finance; although the finance of the schools is largely based on the state financing, private financing has a very important place in practice, and although the resources are determined by law, school principals have to produce their own solutions to find resources due to the problems in providing financial resources by the state (Altunay, 2019, p. 3).

Since the school-based management and funding have increased the school budgets’ reliance upon the financial contribution of parents, its effect on the widening inequalities among the schools in different locations is obvious. In this context, implementation of educational regions gains importance, since it determines the geographical limits of the financial resources of the schools forming the geographical basis of the implementation of school-based management.

Establishment of educational regions in 1999 is an administrative regulation towards the realization of cutting public expenditures on education, fundraising by the school administrations and school-parent associations through the implementation of school-based management etc. (Ünal, et al., 2010, p. 39). The purposes of the establishment of educational regions are stated in The Directive of Educational Regions and Educational Committees (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Eğitim Bölgesi, 1999) as follows:

... Educational institutions' complementing each other and forming a whole while carrying out their functions in line with the general purposes and basic principles of national education; identifying the geographical area where these institutions admit students; the establishment of central schools in areas where the population is low and dispersed; common, effective and efficient use of educational personnel, physical capacity, course material and equipment; ensuring the participation and contribution of the internal and external elements of the school, as well as the local governments, the representatives of the private sector and voluntary organizations, to the management of education and decision-making processes; transforming the school into a source of pride by integrating the school with the surrounding area and encouraging cooperation between the academic environment and the school in all areas; thus, to regulate the basic principles, management, operation and functions of the establishment of educational regions and educational committees that will enable the improvement and continuity of quality in education

The stated purposes can be divided into three groups: 1- the effectiveness in the usage of resources in different schools located in the region or provided for the region, 2- involvement of non-governmental organizations, private sector actors and local governments in the decisions related to the schools, 3- determination of the geographical areas where the schools will accept students (Ünal et al., 2010, p. 40). For the third purpose, creation of school regions was envisaged, as well. The current Directive on Educational Regions (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Eğitim Bölgeleri Yönergesi, 2017) which repealed this Directive does not include the third purpose, but effective and common use of educational resources, and ensuring the participation and contribution of “internal and external stakeholders” in line with the purpose of increasing educational quality remain.

The regulation is evaluated as an attempt towards decentralization of administrative structure of education (Ünal et al., 2010; Ölmez & Tonbul, 2011), however the intended aims such as participation and schools' benefit from the resources of other institutions in the regions have been far from realized in practice (Ölmez & Tonbul, 2011). Indeed, in line with the purpose of participation, implementations for strengthening the representation of parents in school decisions have operated as instrument to create fund for the school budget in practice. As stated by Ünal and her colleagues,

the impact of these practices is not limited to finding financial resources for the school from parents; while legalizing "consumer participation" in school expenses, on the other hand, cause the concept of "participation" to be redefined as "participating by giving money" or "participating in the cost", so reduce contributing to any collective effort to "participation by paying money (Ünal et al., 2010, p. 56).

According to the Directive, every province or district with a population of less than 30.000 is an educational region. If the population is more than 30.000, the regions are created by a commission considering “school types and number of students; equipment of educational institutions and capacity of other facilities; ease of transportation and security; geographical integrity; proximity of educational institutions; ease of communication and coordination” (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Eğitim Bölgeleri Yönergesi, 2017). It is clearly seen that implementation of educational regions, while diversifying the circles of financial resources by including all the sectors other than public sector, limits it geographically. It makes the schools more dependent on the local (regional) resources, and vulnerable to the influence of geographical disparities. Parallel with limiting the capacity of school budget to the financial capacity of parents it served, the educational regions determine the geographical limits of the capacity of the schools’ resources.

The impact of implementation of educational regions and school-based funding on the intensification of school segregation and educational inequalities, especially considering the existing socio-spatial segregation is clear. As stated, “there can be big differences between the schools that can easily collect money from the parents and the schools that cannot do this due to the income level of the families, in terms of the opportunities offered by the school” (Ünal et al., 2010, p. 42). 2018 PISA results are illustrative in that sense; according to the results, the gap between poor and rich schools in Turkey regarding access to educational resources (physical infrastructure and educational material) and staff is larger than the OECD average (OECD, 2019b).

This makes geographical location of a school significant for its budget so for the quality of educational service it provides. Given the residential address-based school placement system in middle school education, socio-economic status of a

neighbourhood a school located gives an idea about the educational quality in the school. However, as the cases of popular schools will show, neighbourhood is significant but not sufficient geographical scale to structure the social composition of the schools, so for the school budgets. As I will discuss in Chapter 5, for these popular schools, the relationship between school budget and social composition works in reverse. The need for fundraising turns into an important mechanism of informal school selectivity. Therefore, school-based funding becomes a tool in the hands of the school principals in negotiating the boundaries of their enrolment area determined by the placement system, in practice. What makes this possible in practice is the co-existence of the residential address-based placement system and uneven geographical distribution of educational resources. Now, before the examination of the uneven geographical distribution of educational resources in Ankara context, I will focus on the spatial factors that form the competitive structure of the educational field in Turkey. Since my intent is to investigate the socio-spatial strategies of the parents for access to better quality education within a highly competitive institutional context, how this institutional context triggers them spatially is important.

3.3. Spatiality of educational inequalities: Structural roots of socio-spatial closure

In line with the context specific account of structure, I have argued that due to the limited and unevenly distributed educational resources, field of education in Turkey is unevenly structured and competitive. How this structure operates on the agents unequally, how the competition for access to better quality education has intensified especially for the middle-class parents who stay in the public education system and demand for secular education and exam-preparation instruction is also discussed. Now, in line with the integration of social space and physical space, I will discuss the spatiality of uneven educational structure in Turkey in terms of uneven geographical distribution of educational resources first. Then, I will focus on the school placement system as the formal rules of spatial access to the schools. How spatially uneven educational structure operates on the agents unequally is the subject of Chapter 5.

As revealed in the literature review, spatial inequalities in education appears in two interrelated terms; one is in the uneven geographical distribution of educational services (supply-side differences), and the two is in the spatial concentration of different social groups (demand-side differences). However, studies predominantly relied upon demand-side differences to explain spatial inequalities, in that concentration of different social groups mostly explains geographical differentiation of educational quality. In other words, schools are segregated as a result of socio-spatial segregation dynamics, and in that sense, what is seen is the reflection of socio-spatial segregation patterns on the schools.

Instead, the argument in the thesis is that socio-spatial segregation, the demand-side inequalities are mediated within the schools and take a diverse form in spatio-institutional terms. In that sense, socio-spatial inequalities, rather than just being reflections, they are involved in the production process of educational inequalities within schools in relation to the supply-side differences. Therefore, uneven geographical distribution of educational supply is itself an issue to be considered in the examination of educational inequalities, since certain locational decisions of the state (such as investment and placement system) generate further inequalities.

3.3.1. Spatial distribution of educational resources

Similar with the related literature, the literature on the spatiality of educational inequalities in Turkey has a tendency of approaching to the spatial inequalities mainly in the context of demand-side differences. The studies which consider the unevenness of educational supply such as teacher characteristics mostly focus on different spatial contexts separately. On the other hand, spatial mobility of parents in the cases of popular schools requires to take geographical contexts relationally. I intend to provide it by contextualizing the schools, within the districts, and province regarding the distribution of educational investments.

Spatial inequalities in education in Turkey mostly refer to regional disparities in terms of educational services and outcomes, and in that sense unevenness of geographical distribution of educational services is mainly revealed country-wide.

Studies shows that regional inequality along with the socio-economic and gender inequalities is a major dimension of educational inequality in compulsory education in Turkey (Oral & Mcgivney, 2014; Buğra & Yılmaz, 2016; Somel, 2019). In Turkey, “there is a significant difference regarding schooling rate, academic success and female enrollment rate between the western and eastern regions” (Somel, 2019, p. 22). The gap between the western and eastern regions in terms of schooling rate indicates that the regions’ share from the improvements in the quantitative capacity of education in Turkey in the last two decades is unevenly distributed.

Geographical distribution of academic performance or achievement of students has a similar pattern. Parallel to the schooling rate disparities, there is a gap between the east and southeastern regions and other regions in terms of academic performance of students (Oral & Mcgivney, 2014). The nation-wide researches on the academic performance of students show that students performing below the basic level in all academic fields are located in Central, Northeast and Southeast Anatolia (Kesbiç, 2021). Similarly, the recent PISA² and TIMSS³ results show that average scores in Turkey vary considerably across the regions. While the Marmara region has the highest achievement levels, Southeast Anatolia (in mathematics and science), and Central East, Northeast and Southeast Anatolia (in reading) have the lowest levels of achievement (ERG, 2020a).

Regional disparities regarding students’ academic achievement include both supply and demand side differences of education system. However, there is a tendency in the studies to explain it with the effect of demand-side differences or with the factors external to the education system. It is a common way, for example, to explain regional inequalities in education with regional income differences (Karahasan & Uyar, 2009), or socio-economic and cultural differences among the regions and families. However, some findings reveal that although regional disparities in educational outcomes corresponds with the average household income in the regions, the difference in academic performance cannot be fully explained by the economic

² PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) 2018 results

³ TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) 2019 results

conditions (Kesbiç, 2021, p. 13). The difference in teacher characteristics is evidence to that. There is a significant difference among the regions regarding the teachers' turnover rate and experience. Inexperienced teachers are mostly concentrated on the Southeastern Anatolia region (ERG, 2021, pp. 13-14). Besides the concentration of less experienced teachers, their relocation to Mediterranean, Aegean, Western Anatolia and Istanbul regions and its effect on the regional disparities is also underlined (ERG, 2020a, p. 41).

Moreover, the indicators of educational quality in the schools such as student-to-classroom and student-to-teacher ratios also indicate that educational quality is unevenly distributed across the country. Number of students per classroom is one of the main areas where regional inequalities persist (ERG; 2016). According to the figure below (Figure 4), Southeast Anatolia and Istanbul are the regions with the most crowded classrooms, the number of students per classroom in these regions is well above the average of Turkey.

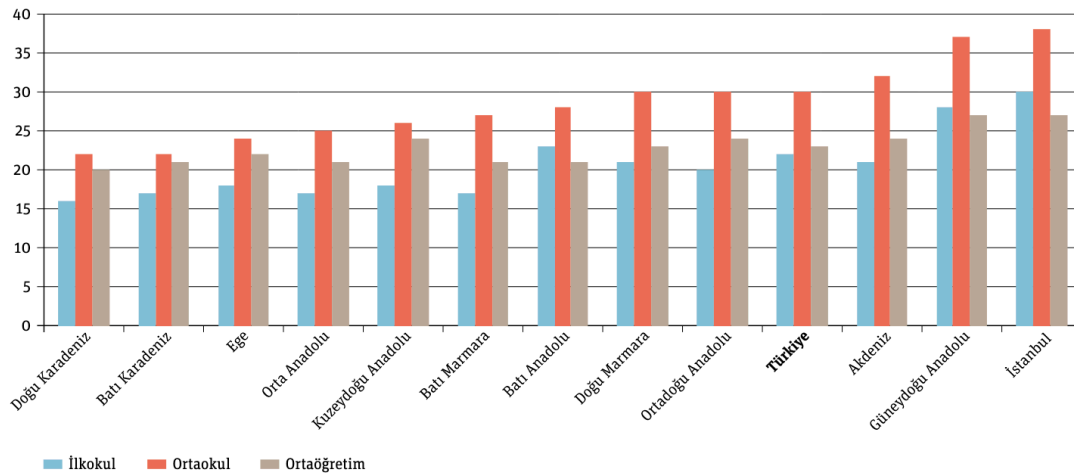


Figure 4: Student per classroom by regions, 2015-2016
Source: ERG, 2016

Similarly, the same regions also stand out with the number of students per teacher much higher than the average of Turkey. This number is particularly high at middle school level in İstanbul, and at primary school level in Southeast Anatolia.

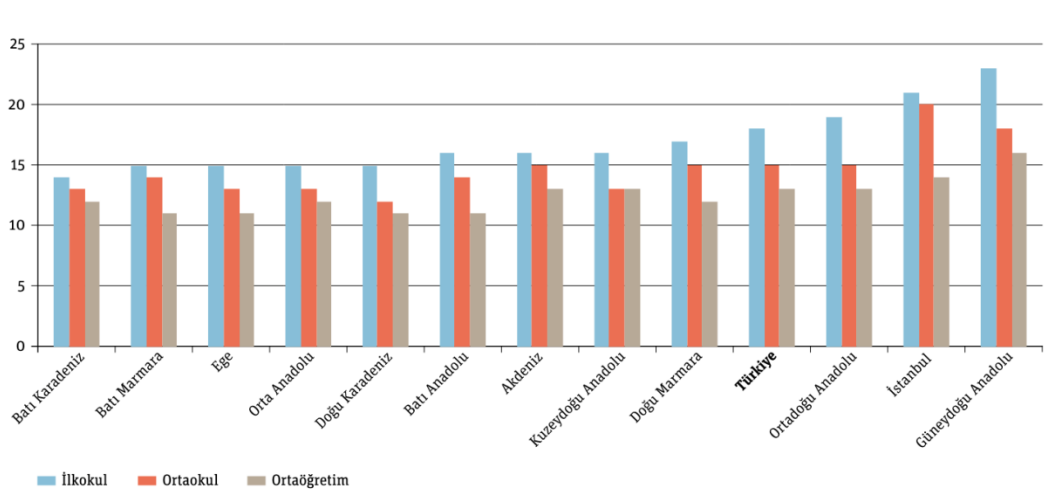


Figure 5: Student per teacher by regions
Source: ERG, 2016

Regional disparities of education in Turkey pointed by these studies and reports reveal that limited resources that structure the educational field in Turkey and generate competition for access to resources, are unevenly distributed geographically, as well. In that sense, educational inequalities arise from the educational supply are objectified in geographical space. Regional disparities in Turkey also shows that Ankara is a good city to select case for the research as it is not an extreme example in terms of distribution of educational resources, but represents the average of Turkey. Regional inequalities also indicate the need to examine the city-wide educational inequalities, since uneven spatial distribution of resources is an important dimension of educational inequalities. As I will show in the next chapter, public educational resources which have been almost constant in the last decade are unevenly distributed across Ankara. In addition to that, uneven distribution of private investments which has increased dramatically in the same period, will indicate that the increasing competition for access to good education, especially in the last decade, is experienced unequally across the city.

More recently, studies address to the city-wide educational inequalities by focusing on socio-spatial segregation, especially in in metropolitan cities (Bayhan, 2016; Nohl & Somel, 2015; Somel & Nohl, 2015). Differentiation in educational provision and practices across the city, especially between the squatter (*gecekondu*) and middle-class areas is one of the central issues in these studies (Akar, 2010; Somel & Nohl,

2015). They show that uneven geographical distribution of educational supply within cities, especially in metropolitan cities is an important dynamic of inequalities in education.

Revealed inequalities in the provision of educational services between the gecekondu and middle-class districts are as follows: Schools and classrooms in the gecekondu districts are more crowded, and the number of students per teacher is higher, accordingly, education in most of the schools in the gecekondu districts is provided in two shifts whereas middle class schools are mostly full day schools. Educational provision in two shifts due to the crowd, lowers the quality of education, it means for example “having shorter breaks between lectures, insufficient time and space for extracurricular activities, and complications in continuous teaching activities (for example, classroom art projects)” (Somel, 2019, p. 24). Furthermore, the schools located in these areas differ in terms of teacher characteristics and budget. While in the schools located in middle class areas, the teachers are more experienced, in the gecekondu schools the teachers are mostly inexperienced, “paid hourly or work on short-term contracts” (Nohl & Somel, 2015, p. 25). More importantly, these schools differ in their budget that is a significant reason of inequality in educational quality. As the schools in Turkey have gradually become more reliant on collecting donations from parents for improving their own budget, there appears significant divergences in their infrastructure, which eventually determine the educational quality, between the schools located in affluent areas and deprived areas in cities. Somel (2017, p. 25) expresses the issue as follows: “Faced with lack of funds, schools turn to local entrepreneurs for sponsorship, use school space for extra income, but they mostly depend on donations from parents” and this is why the variation among the budgets of the schools depending upon their location is dramatic in Turkey.

In that sense, school budget system in relation to the inadequate public resources allocated to schools is an important component of supply-side differences that links the socio-spatial segregation and school differentiation in Turkey, and school budget which is heavily dependent on the socio-economic characteristics of parents in Turkish education system is one of the mechanisms that conveys socio-spatial segregation to the schools, and this offers a good illustration of how socio-spatial

segregation (demand-side differences) expresses itself in the schools through the mediation of institutional mechanisms.

Another mechanism which points both to the demand and supply-side differences is teachers. Like in regional scale, teacher characteristics varies across the city. Somel and Nohl who state that uneven distribution of teachers is a general pattern in Turkey stemming from the schools' hierarchical differentiation in prestige and the appointment system which evaluates teachers' applications according to their experience, underline that prestigious schools in middle class areas attract experienced teachers, whereas the schools in deprived or *gecekondu* areas are "staffed with novice teachers or suffer from lack of teaching staff" (2015, p. 509). They reveal how the curricular practices in the schools differ despite the centrally developed curricula, according to the location of schools through the case of three schools, each located in the areas having different socio-spatial characteristics; one is in a middle-class district, the second is in a *gecekondu* neighborhood, and the third one is in a rural area (Somel & Nohl, 2015). While the new curricula which have a more student-centered approach introduced in 2005 contradicts with the exam preparation activities required for the high school entrance examination in *gecekondu* neighborhood school, curricular and test preparation activities are complementary to each other in the middle class district school. What differentiates the educational practices in these schools is a combination of teachers' experience, budget, and "social milieu" of pupils and parents. These, in relation to each other and to the competitive and unequal educational system, determine how the centrally designed curriculum is practiced in the schools. It is shown that there is a significant gap between the centrally designed educational policies and their implementation/practice within the schools, and the extend of the gap varies in different schools according to their location.

In the study (Somel & Nohl, 2015), the tendency of explaining spatial inequalities in education with demand side differences, and spatial inequalities' referring to the reflection of socio-spatial segregation is avoided by including the differentiation that stems from the educational service provision such as the geographical distribution of teacher characteristics. However, the spatial inequalities appear as an end result, in

other words, we see the effect of different combinations of teachers, budgets and “social milieus” on individual schools in an isolated way, but how these inequalities are produced within the schools in relation to each other that requires a broader geographical perspective is missing.

Moreover, in the studies that address the spatiality of educational inequalities in both national and urban scale, we mainly see the reflections of existing regional or urban inequalities on the schools or the educational practices. The comparison between the gecekondu and middle-class neighborhoods is based on their assumption that spatiality of educational inequalities is connected mainly to the differences in the social composition of the locational areas of the schools. Accordingly, spatial inequalities in education appears as an end result arises from social processes external to the education system. Considering the school budget system in which the schools, regarding their resources, are highly dependent on the socio-economic characteristics of their locational areas, their assumption is not wrong, but deficient. What is overlooked is how the socio-economic characteristics of the locational areas of the schools are mediated within the schools, so the role of school in further creation of educational inequalities. Education system on the other hand, is generally included in the context of insufficient resources or lack of investments, and in this way, quality differences or educational inequalities in more general sense, is directly connected to the demand-side differences. Therefore, rather than uneven geographical distribution of public educational investments, the lack of investments forms the basis of educational inequalities, and this paves the way for neglecting the role of the state in creation of educational inequalities.

Each school is located in a broader educational geography which is formed by uneven distribution of educational investments, and as parts of this geography, they are interrelated to each other. This relationality means that rather than being static, spatial inequalities refer dynamic processes. Inter-school mobility of parents, their rejecting/avoiding neighborhood schools and sending their children to the distant schools indicates this dynamic character of educational inequalities produced in relation to the geography of uneven educational structure. To reveal this, how those inequalities in distributional terms engage with educational practices in the schools is

crucial and constitutes the focus of the Chapter 5. This requires to consider the supply side differences of spatial inequalities in education, therefore the geography of the state's investment decisions, also the placement system themselves constitute a layer for further creation of inequalities through the practices in the schools. Unevenness in the geographical distribution of state's educational investments which is a significant component of spatial inequalities in education will be demonstrated in the next chapter in Ankara context, but another component of spatial inequalities in the education system in Turkey is the placement system which formally regulate the spatial access to the schools.

3.3.2. School placement system: Formal rules of access

As revealed in the previous part, education system in Turkey is highly exam-centric and this is what reproduces its competitive character. Placement to public high schools and universities is heavily based upon central examinations. As mentioned, after a period of series of change in the public high school placement system, the current state of the system is more catchment-based since 2017-2018 academic year with the last change. However, this does not diminish the centrality of placement exam, so the competitiveness of the system especially for the particular middle class families.

Enrollment to public middle schools on the other hand, is not based on central exam but residential address-based. Students are assigned to the school closest to their residence address automatically. School placement system in primary education has long been residential address-based in Turkey. Both the Article 15 of MoNE Regulation on Primary Education Institutions in 1992 (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı İlköğretim Kurumları, 1992) and Article 16 of MoNE Regulation on Primary Education Institutions in 2003 (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı İlköğretim Kurumları, 2003) which repeal the 1992 Regulation states that "It is essential that students are enrolled in the primary school closest to their residence". However, after the establishment of National Address Database (Ulusal Adres Veri Tabanı) in 2007, and then Address-based Population Registration System (Adrese Dayalı Nüfus Kayıt Sistemi) which aims to deliver the services provided by the state to the citizens in the most efficient

way (Sincar & Özbek, 2011), the school placement system was integrated with this database. In 2008 with the Regulation on Amending MoNE Regulation on Primary Education Institutions (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı İlköğretim Kurumları, 2008), Article 16 of the 2003 Regulation was changed as “it is essential for students to be enrolled in the nearest primary school to their residences designated in the National Address Database”. Based on this change in the Regulation, it is stated in the Circular numbered 2009/30 of the Ministry of National Education that starting from the 2009-2010 academic year, school registrations will be based on the addresses in the National Address Database, and will be made online (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı 2009/30 sayılı Genelge). Accordingly, since 2009-2010 academic year, MoNE has started to implement a new e-registration system in which parents and school principals do not meet during the registration process, the registrations are made automatically by the system. The purposes of the system were to prevent crowd in good schools and a more balanced distribution of students to the schools, to solve the school bus service problem, to avoid the fees collected from parents under the name of donation during the registrations (Eskicumalı et al., 2013). It was expected that the system would contribute to students not to waste time to go to distant schools (Polat, 2009). In that sense, address-based school registration in public primary and lower secondary education has been reinforced since 2009-2010 academic year.

According to the current MoNE Regulation on Pre-school Education and Primary Education Institutions (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Okul Öncesi Eğitim, 2014), parents cannot apply for enrollment in schools other than İmam Hatip middle schools. Thus, the school placement system in primary education does not allow parents to choose school. The exceptions according to the Article 12 of MoNE Pre-school Education and Primary Education Institutions Regulation which regulate “transfer” to schools other than the one determined by the system are as follows:

- Children of martyrs, war veterans and war veterans, children who are national athletes, children in need of special education, and the Law No. 6284 on the Protection of the Family and Prevention of Violence Against Women, dated 24/5/1983 and numbered 2828, Social Services Children within the scope of the Law on Child Protection, dated 3/7/2005 and numbered 5395, are transferred to the school they want, regardless of the

quota requirement and regardless of their addresses in the national address database, provided that they document their situation.

- If the school staff requests, their children are transferred to the school they work regardless of their addresses in the national address database.

- The transfers of siblings who have to attend different schools due to the opening of a new school or the change of registration area are made to one of the siblings' school upon the request of the parents.

- If both parents work and if they wish, the transfer of the student is made to the school in the registration area of the address where the mother or father works, provided that is documented

Furthermore, according to the same regulation, the schools whose class sizes are below thirty, can be registered from outside the registration area. If the number of transfer applications exceeds the available quota, they are put into a lottery:

Applications from parents who want to transfer their students to these schools from outside the registration area are received through the e-School system within the first week of the school. In case the transfer applications made on the first working day of the second week are more than the vacant quota, those who will arrive by transfer are determined by lottery on the e-School system, and then transfers are made (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Okul Öncesi Eğitim, 2014).

Although placements are regulated differently, middle schools are not isolated from the competitive and hierarchical structure of the educational system, as stated, since the success of an entire education system is indexed to central exams. Ünal et al. point to the centrality of central exams in Turkish education system containing primary and middle school education stating that “an elitist and selective understanding in education starts to be dominant from primary education despite its being compulsory” (2010, p. 200). As argued, the recent change in high school placement system which replaces national exam-based placement system with a mainly residential address-based placement system has increased the competitiveness. At this point, it should also be stated on the basis of the findings of field research that the recent policy change has increased the competition for access to quality/prestigious middle schools, as well. Since the recent change has made it more competitive and difficult to place in a quality high school with the central exam, which school the students attends at middle school level at which they prepare for the high school placement exam has become more important in the eyes of these families.

As revealed by the literature on school choice, in the educational systems which offer greater chance to parents for choice, the schools are more socio-economically differentiated, in other words, social differentiation among the schools is greater, and this increases the demand for school choice since parents, especially the middle classes want to send their children to the middle-class schools, and this become a kind of vicious circle in which socio-spatial segregation and school differentiation feed each other. In that sense, the placement systems which are based on school choice are criticized for intensifying the educational inequalities and social injustice when compared with catchment-based placement system which seems more equitable since school segregation stemming from individual choices of parents are eliminated.

However, school placement system cannot be evaluated in terms of educational inequalities in an isolated way from major characteristic of educational system, also the socio-spatial segregation in the cities as claimed before. When we consider these two, address-based placement system in Turkey appears as an important mechanism for creation of educational inequalities. In Turkey inequalities in relation to the address-based placement system stem from the fact that it neglects the existing socio-spatial segregation of the cities and more importantly assumes that educational services are distributed evenly over the city, so the uneven geographical distribution of educational investments and quality schools is ignored. Actually, social differentiation among the public schools as a result of the reproduction of socio-spatial segregation in the schools by the address-based placement system is not only neglected but also normalized by the authorities. For example, after the abolishment of obligation to wear school uniforms in the schools in 2012 by MoNE, the ones who were against this change arguing that abolishment of school uniforms makes existing socio-economic differences more visible in the schools are responded by the representatives of MoNE referring to the socio-economically homogenous student profile of each school thanks to the reinforcement of the residential address-based placement system. It is stated that residential address-based placement provides

neighbourhood students, whose families are expected to similar socio economic status especially in metropolitan cities in Turkey, to enroll at the same schools⁴.

The explanation demonstrates that existing socio-spatial segregation in the cities, especially in the metropolitan cities legitimates the differentiation among the schools, and once this is legitimized, it is obvious that quality differences among the schools more easily stop being a problem for educational service providers due to the tendency to explain it with demand-side differences.

As stated, the placement system in terms of spatial inequalities of the education system can be understood with the existing socio-spatial segregation in the cities and the geographical distribution of educational provision and state's investments. As demonstrated by the explanation of representative of the Ministry above, address-based placement system in Turkey, causes the existing social segregation in the cities to be reproduced in the schools by transferring the social composition of neighborhoods to the neighborhood schools. Moreover, address-based placement system in a geography of unevenly distributed educational provision and state's educational investments paves the way for practices that create further inequalities. The parents who avoid neighborhood schools and want to send their children to distant schools have to access those schools by bypassing the regulations on placement. This forms another mechanism for access which is informally determined within the schools. In other words, address-based placement system in Turkey neglects not only the uneven geographical distribution of educational provision, but also the high demand for certain quality schools caused by this unevenness, this in return, strengthens the role of school principals and schools in determining the informal rules of access implicitly.

As I have shown, geographical inequality is a major dimension of educational inequalities in Turkey. This is also the case within cities. Educational inequalities within cities mostly refer to the effect of existing socio-spatial segregation patterns within cities on schools through unequally structuring the social composition of the schools. Given the residential address-based school placement system and school

⁴ <https://www.sabah.com.tr/egitim/2012/11/27/mustesardan-okullarda-kiyafet-serbestligi-aciklamasi>

funding which heavily relies on the parents' contributions, the effect of socio-spatial segregation on school segregation cannot be ignored. However, as stated, inter-school mobility of parents indicates that investigation on the spatiality of educational inequalities must problematize the geographical distribution of not only the social composition but educational supply as well. This also enables to overcome the external relationship established between education system and social inequalities in education through the spatiality of educational inequalities as well. In order to investigate how educational field in Turkey that creates competitive pressure on the middle classes in public education triggers their competitive action through the uneven geographical distribution of resources, I focused on public middle schools in Ankara that receive high demand paying special attention to their geographical location. Now, in the next chapter, I will search for the geographical expression of competition in Ankara context, and present my strategy for case selection, and logic of comparison.

CHAPTER 4

SPATIAL CONTEXT OF INEQUALITIES: ANKARA

Ankara represents the average regarding the geographical distribution of educational inequalities across the country as shown in the previous chapter, and as it is a metropolitan city, offers a good geographical context to investigate the school differentiation created by the competitive action of the middle-class parents. The total number of public and private middle schools in Ankara is 860 and the total number of middle school students is nearly 316.000 in 2020-2021 education year. As I will show in detail below, public educational investments are unevenly distributed among 25 districts of Ankara, and geographical distribution of demand in terms of socio-economic status is also uneven across the city.

In the last decade, there has been a striking difference between the increase rates of public and private middle school numbers in Ankara. The number of private schools has increased 18 times more than the number of public schools. Etimesgut, Çankaya, Keçiören, Gölbaşı and Yenimahalle are the districts where this increase is the highest and where private investments are concentrated. According to all basic indicators of public educational investments and educational quality (student to classroom, student to teacher and student to school ratios), Keçiören, Mamak, Pursaklar, Sincan and Altındağ are the most disadvantageous districts regarding the public educational investments and educational quality. Insufficient public educational investments are concentrated especially in the metropolitan districts of Ankara, the exceptions are Çankaya and Gölbaşı. Çankaya is the most advantageous district regarding public educational investments and educational quality.

As discussed in the previous chapter, education system in Turkey is structurally competitive, mostly because of the limited resources directed to education by the

state. Despite the last policy changes in high school placement system in order to reduce exam-based competition, the competition for access to the prestigious schools has increased especially for the certain middle class groups who seek for exam preparation instruction, because the number of prestigious selective high schools has decreased. As I claimed, the competition for access to educational resources, reinforced by the exam-centric education system has spread to all levels of education, therefore middle school education is also part of the same competitive educational structure that is prone to create school hierarchies and selectivity.

Now, I will examine the competition which is mainly for access to scarce public educational resources and which has increased in the last decade, in Ankara context. In doing so, I intent to reveal that competition is not just a matter of access to scarce resources, but of access to unevenly distributed educational resources across the city, and therefore it is also a matter of spatial access. While school differentiation expresses creation of further inequalities by the actions of the parents on unequal educational structure, it also expresses retranslation of spatial inequalities stem from the uneven geographical distribution of public educational resources into a new layer. In other words, popular schools also express creation of school hierarchy spatially through the retranslation of existing spatial inequalities led by uneven distribution of educational resources. In line with that, I employ a two-layered framework to the spatial inequalities of schooling field. One is province-wide educational inequalities led by the state through uneven geographical distribution of educational resources, reveals how the structural inequalities in the investment decisions of the state take a geographical form. The second layer is district-wide inequalities created by the actions of parents, school principals and teachers, in relation to the geography of unevenly distributed educational resources, shows how structural inequalities are retranslated into school hierarchies socio-spatially. In order to reveal how school hierarchy/differentiation is produced in a spatially-specific way, or in other words, how the competitive educational structure in Turkey unequally operates on the agents spatially as well, I need to investigate on the competitive action of the parents triggered by the institutional context in different spatial contexts. Therefore, while focusing on the schools where competitive action is directed, I considered that these schools are located in different spatial contexts in

terms of distribution of educational supply, so within the first layer of educational inequalities which is province-wide. In other words, since I investigate on how the competitive action of the parents to access better quality education is triggered spatially, I considered the spatial match and mismatch between the educational supply and demand. For this, I searched for the districts where there is a demand for better quality education, but where public educational investments are compatible and incompatible with this demand.

4.1. Question of limited resources and competition in Ankara

Before the examination of the province-wide inequalities regarding the distribution of public educational investments by the districts of Ankara, a comparison between the public and private investments will be provided. This will show the general picture of demand for better quality education in relation to the public educational provision, and demonstrate increasing competition for the middle-class parents in the public education sector in Ankara. If we look at the public and private middle school numbers in the last decade in Ankara, it is clearly seen that the number of private middle schools has increased much more than the number of public schools. The difference between the increase rates of public and private middle schools is quite striking; while the number of public middle schools has increased by 12% in the last ten years, the number of private schools has increased by 216%.

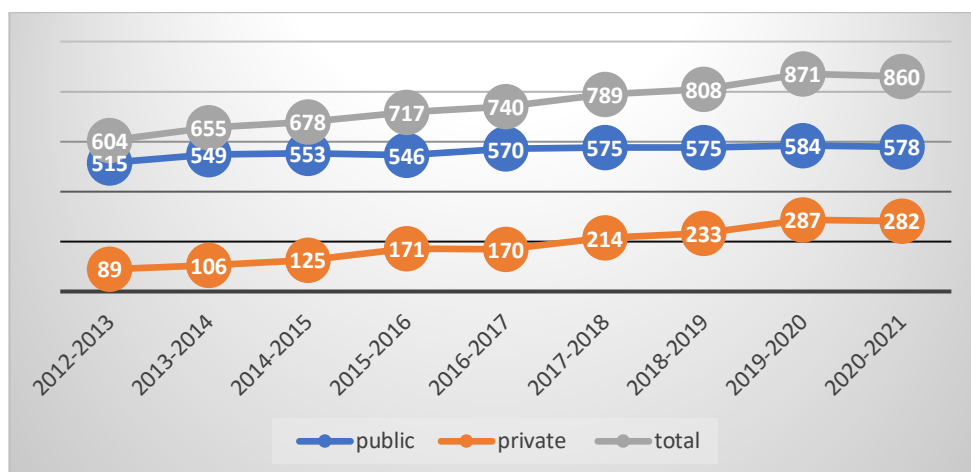


Figure 6: Numer of middle schools in Ankara

Source: Created by the author based on MoNE national education statistics

The striking difference between the public and private schools' increase rates shows that the percentages of private and public schools within the total number of schools in Ankara have gradually approximated to each other in the last decade. The graph below shows this approximation; public schools have been losing their weight against the private schools.

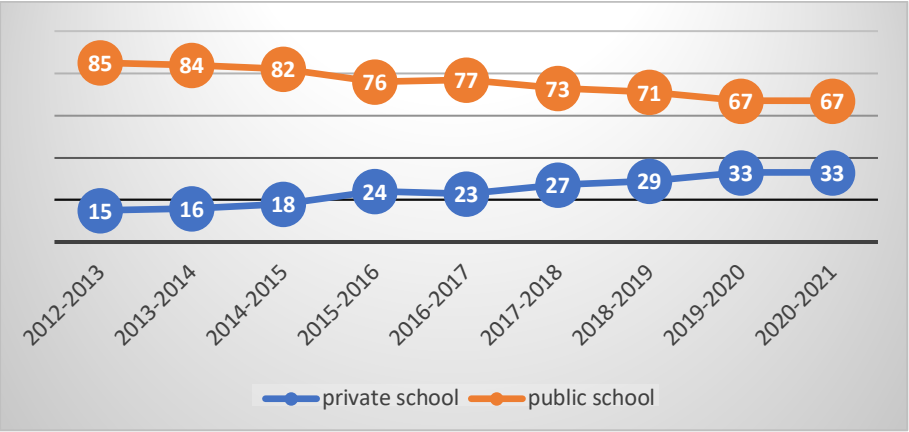


Figure 7: Percentages of public and private middle schools in Ankara
 Source: Created by the author based on MoNE national education statistics

The difference between the increase rates of private and public schools in Ankara indicates that inequalities in education have increased based on the increase in household expenditures, but more importantly, it shows that public educational investments remain increasingly insufficient in the face of increasing demand for better quality education. Based on this, it can be asserted that the competition for access to good education triggered by the limited public educational resources and its pressure on the families in the public education sector has increased in the last decade in Ankara.

Now, we can look at the distribution of increased demand for better quality education through the distribution of private investments across Ankara. The districts where the private investments on education is concentrated will be the districts which come to the fore for the case selection as they indicate presence of middle-class parents who demand for better quality education. As can be seen from the table below (Table 2), private investments on education are concentrated in certain districts of Ankara; the districts with higher percentage of private middle schools than the average

percentage of Ankara are Çankaya, Etimesgut, Gölbaşı, Keçiören and Yenimahalle, and especially Çankaya and Etimesgut having much higher percentages are distinguished among others. In these two districts, private schools constitute more than half of the total number of schools. These are the districts where the demand for better quality education can be found more. Therefore, they are the districts I concentrated on for the school selection.

Table 2: Percentage of private middle schools by the districts of Ankara (%)⁵
Source: Created by the author based on education statistics of Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education

| Districts | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 | 2016-2017 | 2017-2018 | 2018-2019 | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| AKYURT | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ALTINDAĞ | 7 | 9 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 11 | 11 |
| AYAŞ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BALA | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BEYPAZARI | 10 | 22 | 13 | 22 | 22 | 14 | 14 |
| ÇAMLIDERE | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ÇANKAYA | 42 | 48 | 46 | 51 | 53 | 57 | 56 |
| ÇUBUK | 13 | 13 | 10 | 10 | 14 | 17 | 25 |
| ELMADAĞ | 0 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 12 | 12 |
| ETİMESGUT | 20 | 32 | 43 | 49 | 54 | 61 | 58 |
| EVREN | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| GÖLBAŞI | 22 | 26 | 25 | 29 | 33 | 35 | 36 |
| GÜDÜL | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| HAYMANA | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| KAHRAMANKAZAN | 10 | 10 | 0 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| KALECİK | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| KEÇİÖREN | 22 | 27 | 23 | 30 | 36 | 37 | 37 |
| KIZILCAHAMAM | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MAMAK | 0 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 10 | 10 |
| NALLIHAN | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| POLATLI | 12 | 15 | 12 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 15 |
| PURSAKLAR | 16 | 21 | 18 | 17 | 29 | 33 | 30 |
| SİNCAN | 7 | 12 | 6 | 13 | 15 | 14 | 14 |

⁵ Data for the previous two academic years is not available on the web page of Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education

Table 2 (continued)

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| ŞEREFLİKOÇHISAR | 8 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| YENİMAHALLE | 33 | 43 | 37 | 42 | 45 | 46 | 47 |
| ANKARA | 18 | 24 | 23 | 27 | 29 | 33 | 33 |

In order to reveal the spatially unequal educational structure in Ankara, I will examine the distribution of educational supply by the districts. This will also show why Keçiören and Çankaya were selected for school selection. These are the districts with demand for better quality education as I stated above, but while public educational supply is compatible with this demand in Çankaya, it is incompatible in Keçiören.

4.2. Province-wide educational inequalities: Case selection

This section focuses on the first layer, province-wide inequalities, in order to show the uneven geographical distribution of public educational investments across Ankara, through the examination of MoNE statistics on number of schools, students, classrooms, number of students per school, per classroom and per teacher by the districts of Ankara. This will reveal how the structural inequalities in the investment decisions of the state take a geographical form in Ankara.

Student-to-school and student-to-classroom and student-to-teacher ratios allow to make evaluation on the sufficiency of public educational investments according to the number of students, and on quality of public education. The number of students per school gives a general idea about sufficiency of public investments according to the student density.

As seen in Table 3, Altındağ, Etimesgut, Keçiören, Mamak, Pursaklar, Sincan and Yenimahalle are the districts with the lowest number of schools compared to their student population. The number of students per school in these districts is higher than the average number of Ankara which is 500. Among them, Etimesgut, Keçiören and Sincan are the districts with the highest number of students per school. This indicates that public school investments are inadequate in these districts compared to their

number of students. Moreover, the probability of provision of education in two shifts due to the crowd that lowers the educational quality is higher in these districts.

Table 3: 2019-2020 academic year student-to-school ratios by districts
Source: Created by the author based on education statistics of Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education

| DISTRICTS | NUMBER OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS | NUMBER OF STUDENTS | NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER SCHOOL |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| AKYURT | 11 | 2.524 | 229 |
| ALTINDAĞ | 48 | 25.611 | 533 |
| AYAŞ | 5 | 475 | 95 |
| BALA | 12 | 722 | 60 |
| BEYPAZARI | 6 | 2.823 | 470 |
| ÇAMLIDERE | 3 | 252 | 84 |
| ÇANKAYA | 70 | 29.533 | 421 |
| ÇUBUK | 19 | 6.085 | 320 |
| ELMADAĞ | 14 | 2.604 | 186 |
| ETİMESGUT | 35 | 28.653 | 818 |
| EVREN | 1 | 81 | 81 |
| GÖLBAŞI | 26 | 6.694 | 257 |
| GÜDÜL | 4 | 245 | 61 |
| HAYMANA | 14 | 1.383 | 98 |
| KAHRAMANKAZAN | 9 | 3.876 | 430 |
| KALECİK | 6 | 537 | 89 |
| KEÇİÖREN | 61 | 51.307 | 841 |
| KIZILCAHAMAM | 6 | 1.111 | 185 |
| MAMAK | 65 | 35.739 | 549 |
| NALLIHAN | 4 | 1.191 | 297 |
| POLATLI | 24 | 7.786 | 324 |
| PURSAKLAR | 16 | 10.609 | 663 |
| SİNCAN | 48 | 35.153 | 732 |
| ŞEREFLİKOÇHİSAR | 12 | 1.718 | 143 |
| YENİMAHALLE | 57 | 31.458 | 551 |
| TOTAL | 576 | 288.170 | 500 (Ankara average) |

Student-to-classroom ratio, on the other hand, is the highest in Keçiören, Mamak and Sincan. These are the districts with most crowded classrooms with the average of 40, 45 and 41 respectively while the average number is 32 in Ankara. The districts can be grouped into four in terms of their average number of students per classroom. One group of districts (Ayaş, Bala, Evren, Güdül, Haymana, Kalecik, Kızılcahamam, Nallıhan, Şereflikoçhisar) have the average number below 20, which is very low compared to Ankara average (32), the second group of districts (Akyurt, Altındağ, Beypazarı, Çamlıdere, Çankaya, Elmadağ, Gölbaşı, Kahramankazan, Polatlı, Yenimahalle) have the average number between 20 and 32, still below the Ankara average but higher than the first group, the third group of districts (Çubuk, Etimesgut, Pursaklar) have the average number above the Ankara average but below 40, and the fourth group (Keçiören, Mamak, Sincan) have the average number above the average of Ankara by a large margin.

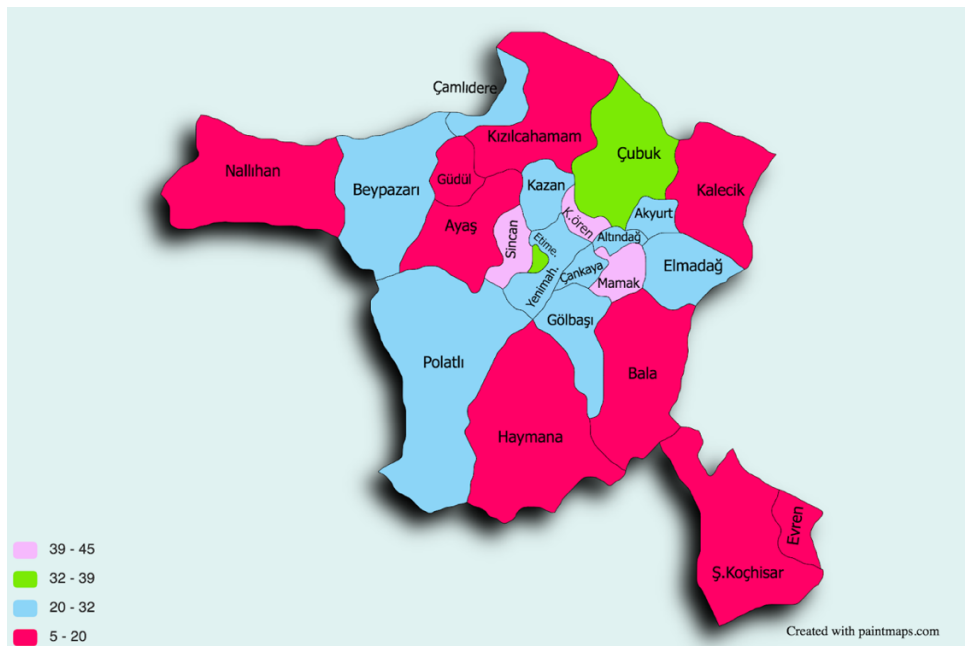


Figure 8: Number of students per classroom by the districts of Ankara (2019-2020)
 Source: Created by the author based on education statistics of Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education

When we look at another indicator of public investments and educational quality, student-to-teacher ratio, except Çamlıdere where the number of students per teacher

is much higher than the Ankara average (15), almost the same districts are distinguished with higher student-to-teacher ratios. Çamlıdere (25), Altındağ (18), Çubuk (18), Evren (16), Haymana (16), Keçiören (16), Mamak (17), Pursaklar (18), Sincan (16) are the districts with higher student to teacher ratios than the average of Ankara (15).

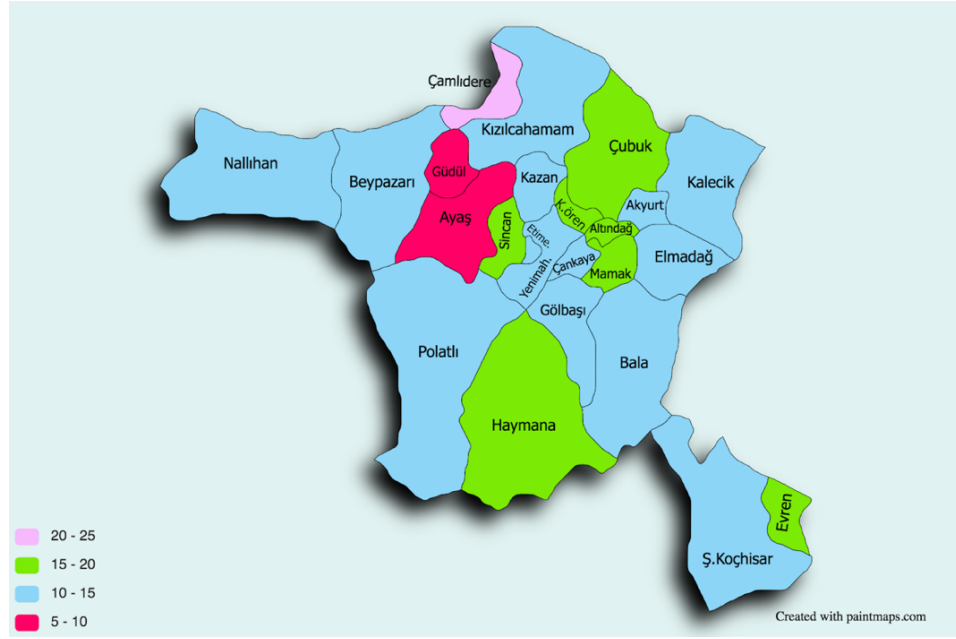


Figure 9: Number of students per teacher by districts of Ankara (2019-2020)
Source: Created by the author based on education statistics of Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education

When we evaluate all three indicators together, Keçiören, Mamak, Pursaklar and Sincan appear as the districts having most inadequate public educational investments. These are the districts that receive the least share from the distribution of educational resources province-wide. More crowded classrooms, schools and insufficient number of teachers and educational infrastructure can be expected in these districts. In that sense, these are the most disadvantageous districts in terms of public educational supply and the school quality. On the other hand, a significant number of districts (Akyurt, Ayaş, Bala, Beypazarı, Çankaya, Elmadağ, Gölbaşı, Güdül, Kahramankazan, Kalecik, Kızılcahamam, Nallıhan, Polatlı, Şereflikoçhisar) seems advantageous in terms of public educational investments, since all of three indicators are below the average of Ankara for these districts. What is more,

insufficient public educational investments are concentrated especially in the metropolitan districts of Ankara, while the advantage in terms of public educational investments seems to be spread out to the remote districts. The exceptional districts in that sense are Gölbaşı and Çankaya.

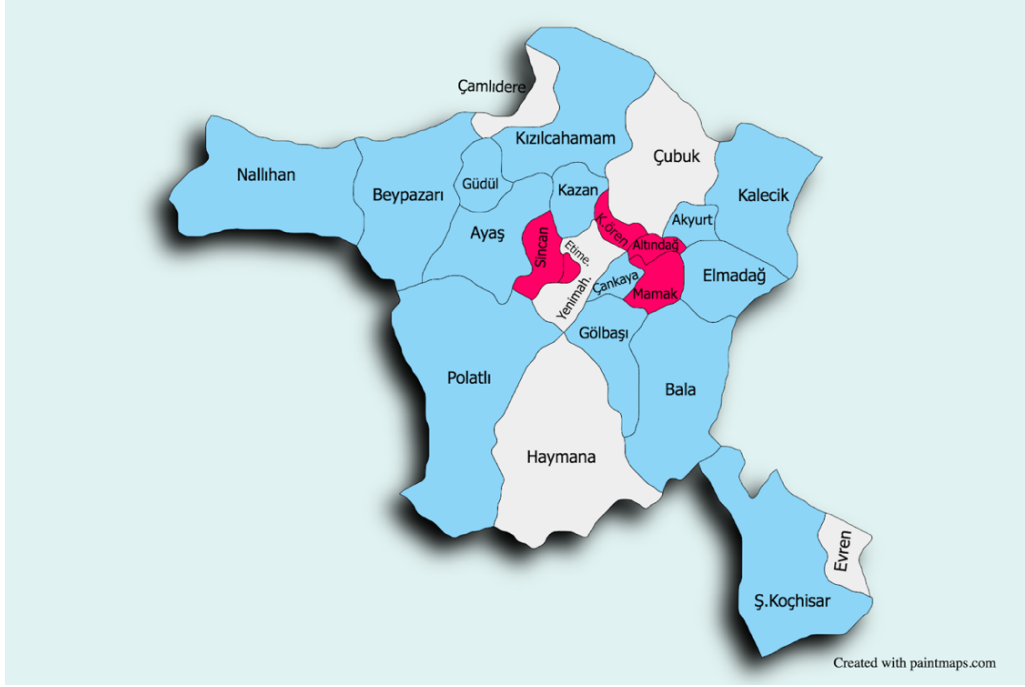


Figure 10: The most and least advantageous districts regarding the public educational investments

Source: Created by the author based on education statistics of Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education

So far, I have shown how public educational investments are unevenly distributed across Ankara. While Çankaya and Gölbaşı are the districts to where the public educational resources directed the most, Keçiören, Mamak, Pursaklar, Sincan and Altındağ are the districts with most inadequate public educational resources. When we consider this with the distribution of demand for better quality education among the districts, Çankaya and Keçiören distinguished among the others. While both of the districts are where the demand for quality education is high, they differ in terms of concentration of public educational resources.

Since my aim is to find public schools with high demand which indicates concentration of competitive action of the middle class parents, the districts I select

for the case selection must have a certain middle-class presence. However, they must differ in terms of public educational supply as I stated before. By this way, the creation of educational inequalities by the actions of parents will be contextualized geographically regarding match and mismatch between the educational supply and demand.

Çankaya is the district where the public educational investments are concentrated most, and the public education is of the highest quality in Ankara, also where the middle classes are concentrated in Ankara. Keçiören, on the other hand, is one of the districts with the lowest public educational investments, and with the poorest quality public education, but there is a certain middle class existence indicated by demand for better quality education evidenced by the significant number of private school in the district.

In order to select cases (schools) in these two districts, I searched for the public middle schools with high demand, the schools to which parents' spatial mobility is directed which indicates demand for better quality education, so the schools to which the competitive action of parents for access to better quality education is directed in these two districts. As I stated before, especially the public schools which are selected by the state for pilot implementations or which were established with a special purpose indicating transfer of educational resources by the state gain prestige and receive high demand. In that sense, I especially searched for this kind of schools, and based on the information obtained from the Provincial Directorate of National Education in Ankara, I selected cases (schools), one is a pilot school (in Keçiören), the other is a school established as a science and art center (BİLSEM) to serve for high intelligence children (in Çankaya). These are the public schools to which parents' spatial mobility is directed which indicates demand for better quality education, so the schools to which the competitive action of parents for access to better quality education is directed in these two districts. As can be seen from the map below (Figure 11), parents' spatial mobility via school service buses is high to these schools located in Çankaya (School A) and in Keçiören (School B).

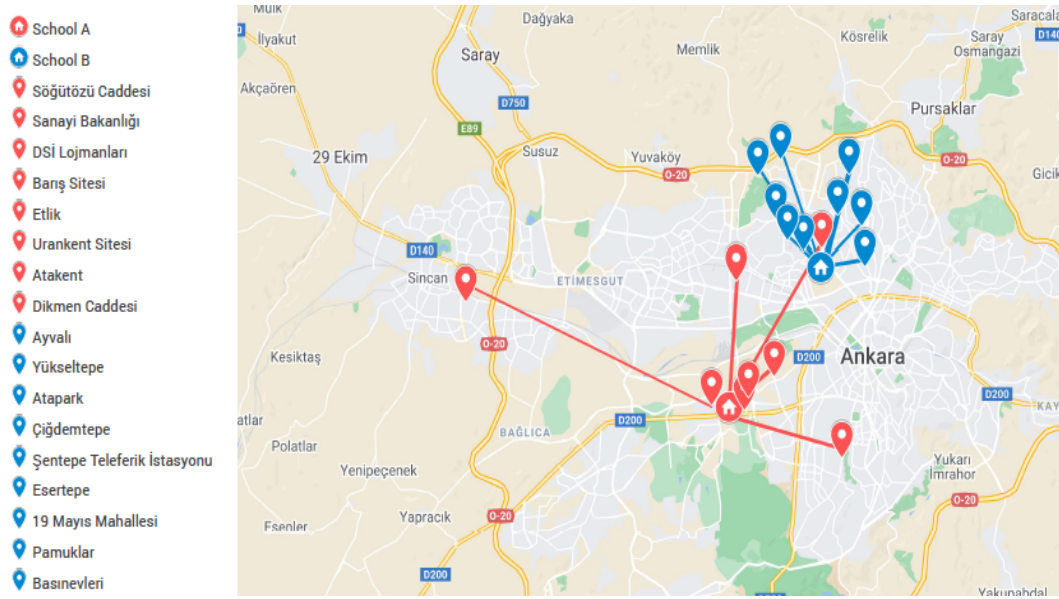


Figure 11: Catchment areas of the schools

Source: Created by the author based on the routes of the school service buses

4.3. District-wide educational inequalities: Logic of comparison

District-wide educational inequalities refer to the creation of educational inequalities/school differentiation by the actions of the agents in relation to the province-wide educational inequalities led by the uneven geographical distribution of public educational supply. With this framework I intend to investigate how competitive action of parents for access to better quality educational resources mediated by geography of educational supply. Moreover, as the two popular public schools are located in two different districts in terms of distribution of educational supply, I aim to reveal how educational inequalities/school differentiation is created in a spatially-specific way according to not only geographical distribution of social composition but also educational resources. Thus, while contextualizing the competitive action of parents for access to the educational resources geographically, I aim to integrate their social positions with geographical positions with respect to geographical distribution of educational resources. Through this, I intend to uncover how structure of the educational field operates unequally on the agents spatially, as well, and how this make difference in creation of educational inequalities.

4.3.1. Questioning competitive action

These two schools express creation of school hierarchy/differentiation by the competitive action for access to better quality public education which has become increasingly difficult as discussed in the previous chapter. However, as seen from the map above (Map-4), the mobility targeting school A spread geographically wider area, covering different districts of Ankara. Mobility towards School B, on the other hand, takes place mostly in Keçiören. When the geographical distribution of educational supply is considered; School A is demanded among more and better quality public schools, School B is demanded among poor quality and limited number of public schools.

Geographically different view of these two competitive actions indicates a need to question the parents' motivations behind their actions in relation not only to their social positions but also to their geographical positions with respect to the distribution of educational supply. Although both can be evaluated as competitive action and both group of parents represent particular middle class groups in the educational field on whom pressure for access to better quality education has increased, this questioning will reveal how access strategies are geographically conditioned and differs accordingly.

Questioning competitive action of the parents regarding their motivations and strategies in relation to their geographical positions requires to question these schools as the targets of the parents' competitive actions, as well. First of all, considering that the competitive action of families is for access to better quality education in general sense, the dynamics that make these schools better educational resources should be revealed as the dynamics that differentiate them from other public schools. In other words, why they are better schools should be investigated in relation to the parents' strategies.

If we look at the geographically different view of these two competitive actions backward; School A serves to wider geographical area composed of different districts, School B on the other hand, serves mainly to Keçiören. This suggests that

although the two schools differ from other public schools because they are "better schools", the dynamics that differentiate these two schools from other schools should be contextualized geographically. That is, their position in the schooling field needs to be integrated with their geographical position; their geographical location with respect to the distribution of agents and educational resources. This requires to examine the geographical distribution of educational demand and will be provided below in order to compare the schools' positions regarding the social composition of the districts they located.

4.3.2. School selectivity

Although social composition is important to determine the positions of the schools in schooling field, as evidenced from the spatial mobility of parents from different districts and neighbourhoods towards the schools, the relationship between geography and social composition cannot be regarded passively. In other words, since the social compositions of the schools does not correspond with their neighbourhoods, formation of social composition in these schools should also be problematized. If it is not the residential address-based placement regulations that forms these schools' social compositions, what determines placement spatially gains significance. This envisages a more active role in creation of school hierarchy/differentiation to space rather than taking it as conveyor of social inequalities into the schools.

Questioning what determines placement spatially to these schools, so investigation on the spatial accessibility dynamics requires to look inside the schools as the organizations of educational service delivery, in terms of how socio-spatial inequalities are negotiated between the parents and principals. As discussed, competition stems from the limited educational resources that structure educational field in Turkey unevenly, tends to create school selectivity along with school hierarchy. As the schools with high demand and where the competitive actions of the parents are directed, how this demand regulated gains significance. What is the counterpart of the tendency of school selectivity generated by the educational structure in these schools, and how this form the spatial accessibility dynamics? In

other words, if these schools' differentiation in terms of creation of social inequalities is not through the address-based placement system, so school differentiation does not the mere reflection of the socio-spatial segregation, what is the relationship between the rules of access and socio-spatial segregation?

The difference between geographical scales of spatial mobility towards the schools indicates that spatial accessibility dynamics differ between the schools. Moreover, the relationship between spatial accessibility dynamics and socio-spatial segregation should be investigated province-wide in School A, and district-wide in School B.

4.3.3. School hierarchy

I regard differentiation of these schools from other public schools, their formation as popular schools in the context of school hierarchy that unequal and competitive structure of the educational field in Turkey tends to create along with school selectivity. As discussed, differentiation among the schools in a hierarchical way mainly refers to the social hierarchies; schools are socially segregated and reproduce social inequalities. What creates socially segregated schools is mainly the actions of the agents depending on their social class positions. As discussed, similar understanding can be found in Turkey that relies upon lack of state investments on education. Lack of investments paves the way for socially segregated schools where children can access according to the socio-economic power of their families. The geographical expression of this is the reflection of socio-spatial segregation patterns in the schools. Accordingly, the geographical context is regarded in terms of social composition and socially different geographical contexts are evaluated separately.

As evidenced from the spatial mobility of parents to these schools, there is a need to contextualize the parents' actions and the schools in a broader geographical context relationally. This is provided by the integrating the schools' positions in schooling field to their geographical positions with respect to distribution of educational supply and demand. By this way, while investigating on how educational inequalities are created in a space-specific way, I aim to evaluate them relationally.

In line with that, I will now focus on the spatial distribution of educational demand (social composition) within Çankaya and Keçiören comparatively. As stated before, distribution of demand is the second axis that connect space to the field, and should be evaluated together with the geographical distribution of educational supply for the spatiality of educational inequalities.

4.4. Distribution of social composition in Çankaya and Keçiören

As stated, to consider social composition at neighborhood scale unlikely to be valid for these schools since they receive students from different neighborhoods. Therefore, socio-spatial segregation is not directly reflected in these schools. This does not diminish the importance of demand-side differences, but makes it necessary to examine in a wider geographical scale.

School A is located in Mustafa Kemal Neighborhood in Çankaya, where used to be a squatter area in the 1990s, but now mostly middle and upper-middle classes live, and work places and ministries are concentrated. School B, on the other hand, is located in Ayvalı Neighborhood, Etlik, in an affluent area of Keçiören. There are trade centers, a shopping mall (Antares), Etlik City Hospital and new apartment buildings around the school. The school is located very close to the border of Keçiören and Yenimahalle that explains the certain number students coming from the particular neighborhoods of Yenimahalle. Moreover, the neighborhood is where mainly the higher income groups live compared to other neighborhoods of Keçiören. The neighborhoods where the students come out of the jurisdictional area such as Yükseltepe, Esertepe, Şentepe are where used to be squatter areas recently, but today new multi-story apartment buildings mainly the lower-income groups live compared to Etlik have taken the place of squatters. In that sense, when compared to School A, the vicinity of the school B is socially more heterogeneous since it is located in an affluent area, but relatively close to the deprived areas.



Figure 12: New multistory apartment buildings in Yükseltepe
Source: Taken by the author, 2019

Socio-spatial segregation in Ankara crystalizes, in general sense, as the distinction between the north and the south of the city. While the low-income groups are concentrated in the north, high income groups mainly live in the southern regions of the city. This overlaps with the occupational distribution in the city; “while the white-collar occupations are concentrated in the south, blue-collar occupations concentrated in the north and the east of the city” (Güvenç, 2006, p. 190).

North-south divide which dated back to the early years of the establishment of Ankara as capital, intensifies with the proliferation of the *gecekondu*s in the northeast and southeast of the city (Şenyapılı, 2006). Eskişehir axis, in the southwest of the city, where Mustafa Kemal Neighborhood is also located has developed as an area where luxury residences and upper middle classes are concentrated after the 1990s. In the same period, urban transformations begin and municipalities make investments in the neighborhoods of the northern districts such as Keçiören, Yenimahalle and Altındağ, but the districts where Ayvalı Neighborhood is also located, and where the squatters are concentrated lose their upper-middle income population to the settlements developing on the İstanbul axis located in the northwest of the city such as Eryaman and Elvankent (Şenyapılı, 2006, pp. 239-240). In that sense, Ayvalı Neighborhood and Mustafa Kemal Neighborhood constitute two different examples socio-spatially, both because they represent the north-south

divide of the city and because the individual development stories of the areas they located is very different.

Yüceşahin and Tüysüz's study on the socio-spatial segregation patterns at the neighborhood scale in Ankara offers a chance to compare the social characteristics of the locational areas of the schools in more detailed, although it is based on 2000 data. In the study, 338 neighborhoods of Ankara are grouped into 6 clusters according to demographic, social and economic variables. These 6 clusters are shown with different colors in a map (Figure 13), they are colored from dark to light according to the socio-economic development level, (brown shows the least developed, cluster, light yellow shows the most developed cluster).

According to the study, Mustafa Kemal Neighborhood is placed in the 2nd cluster which is colored yellow, and consists of the neighborhoods with the highest rate of administrative personnel, and high rate of executive, director and entrepreneurial, also the rate of households with one, two and three members is high. The rate of illiterates, people born in the eastern and central Anatolia regions of Turkey, homeowners are lower than the other clusters except the first one.

Although School B is located in Ayvalı neighborhood which is placed in the 4th cluster (red), it is very closed to the Etlik neighborhood which is placed in the 5th cluster (orange) in the study. The characteristics of these two clusters compared to the 2nd cluster are the higher rates of households with four or five members, high rates of those employed in service and commercial sector, and rates of those born in central Anatolia (in 4th cluster) and southeastern Anatolia (in 5th cluster) regions of Turkey. It is seen in the map that the level of socio-economic development decreases gradually towards the north of the district, Keçiören, where the neighborhoods students from outside the jurisdictional area live are located.

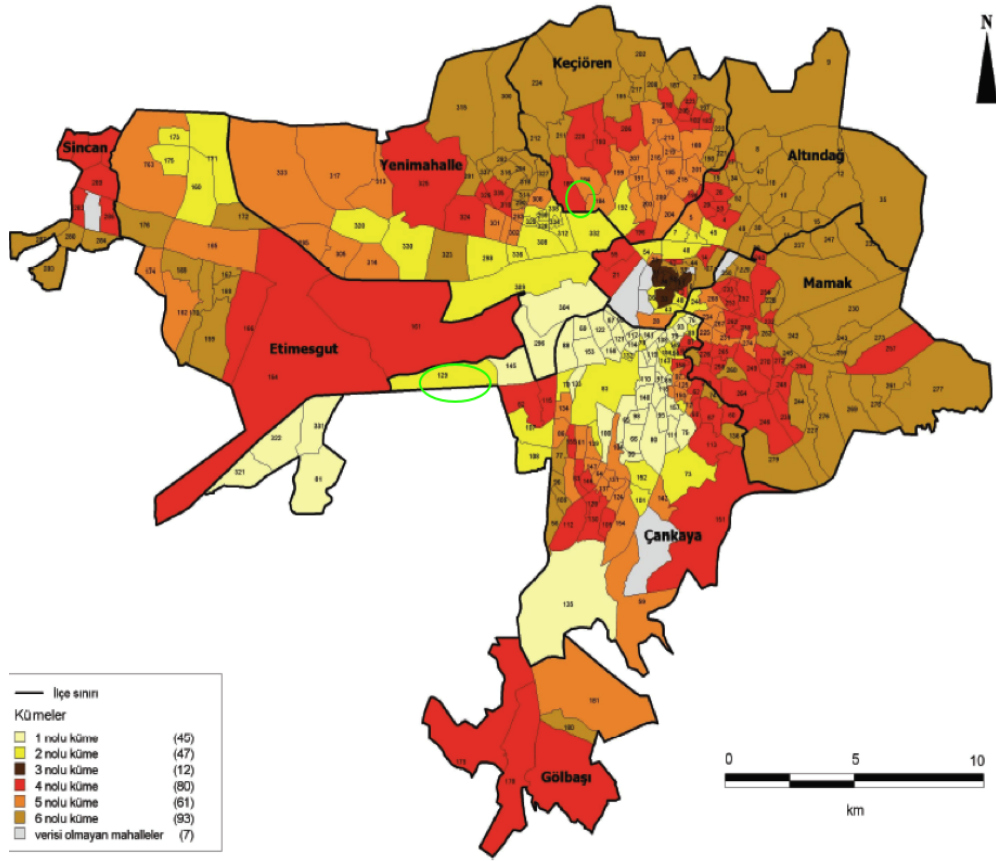


Figure 13: Socio-spatial segregation patterns in Ankara
Source: Yüceşahin and Tüysüz, 2011

As stated before, neighbourhood is significant but not sufficient geographical scale for the examination of the relationship between the schools and social composition and residential segregation. Therefore, I will compare Çankaya and Keçiören regarding the geographical distribution of demand which is the second axis connects space and the schools as fields. In that sense, more recent data on the demographic characteristics of the two districts will be compared. The examination of socio-spatial segregation within the districts regarding especially the educational level and socio-economic status is also provided since segregation levels within the districts is also significant for the exclusionary strategies of the parents.

Firstly, if we compare the educational level in Keçiören and Çankaya, it is seen from the graphs below that there is a significant difference between Çankaya and Keçiören in terms of educational level of population.

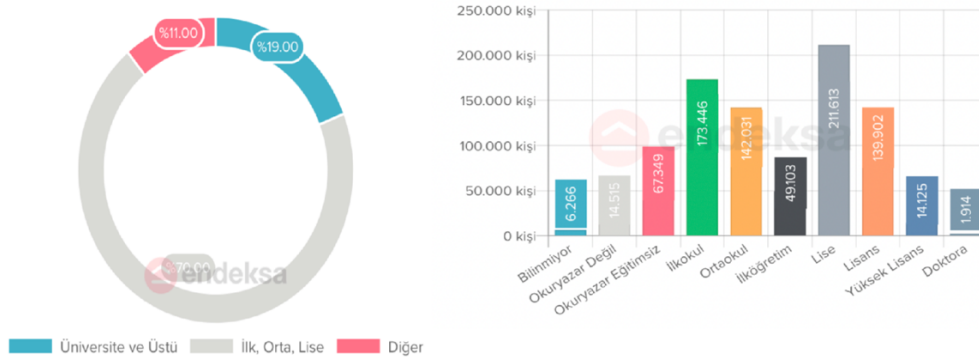


Figure 14: Education level in Keçiören
Source: www.endeksa.com

While 46% of population in Çankaya has university and higher degree, this rate is only 19% in Keçiören. In Keçiören after high school graduates, the largest group is primary school graduates.

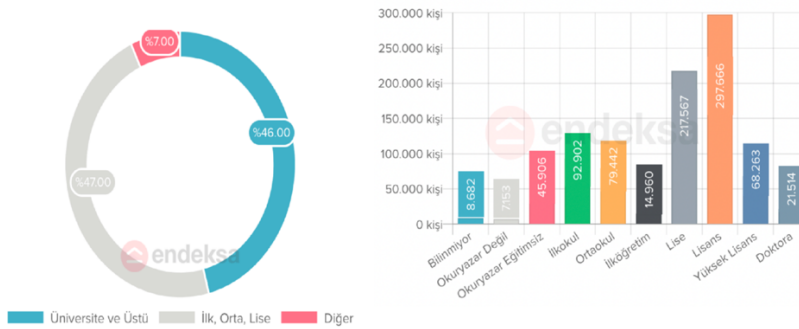


Figure 15: Education levels in Çankaya
Source: www.endeksa.com

In Çankaya, on the other hand, the largest groups are university and high school graduates respectively. The primary school graduates only make up 10,8% of population in Çankaya, while this rate is 21,1% in Keçiören.

Another important indicator which shows the demographic difference between the two districts is socio-economic status. According to the grouping made by using

parameters such as effective age group, land real estate value, housing rental value, housing sales value, education level, household size, number of workplaces, number of banks, purchasing habits, and elderly population ratios, a significant part of population in Çankaya is placed in group A, which is the second highest socio-economic status group.

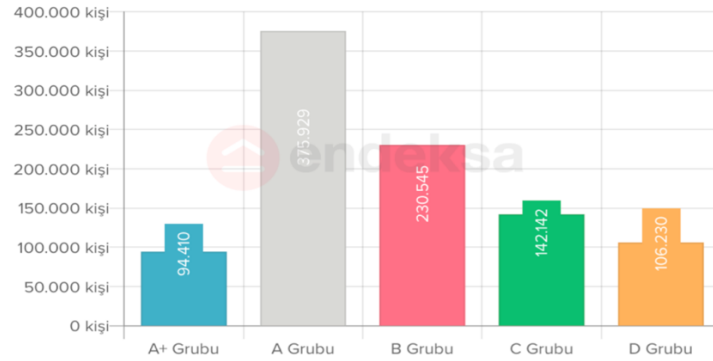


Figure 16: Socio-economic status in Çankaya
Source: www.endeksa.com

In Çankaya, the rate of those evaluated in groups C and D, which indicate low socio-economic status, is only 26% of the population. This rate is %43 in Keçiören. The rate of those evaluated in groups A and A+ in Keçiören is 34%, while this rate is 50% in Çankaya.

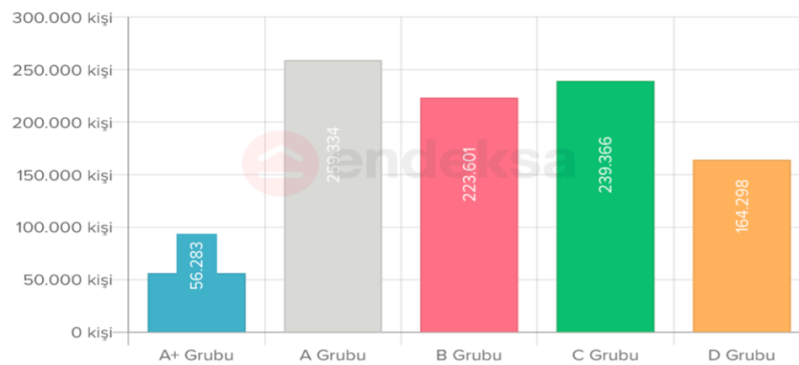


Figure 17: Socio-economic status in Keçiören
Source: www.endeksa.com

The comparison between the two figures above is strikingly reveals that while the high socio-economic status groups are dominant in Çankaya, it is difficult to talk about the dominance of any group in Keçiören. In that sense, Çankaya has more homogenous population in terms of socio-economic level, while the population is socio-economically heterogenous in Keçiören.

The heterogeneity/homogeneity of the population in the Keçiören and Çankaya is significant since it makes difference in the internal dynamics of the schools that is formed in relation to the uneven geographical distribution of social composition and educational supply. Therefore, to reveal the geographical distribution of demographic characteristics, in other words, the geographical expression of homogeneity and heterogeneity within the districts has a particular importance before focusing on the strategies and practices of the agents that form the internal dynamics of the schools.

In other words, the difference in the social characteristics regarding educational and socio-economic levels between Çankaya and Keçiören that refers to the province-wide inequalities constitutes a layer for the educational inequalities, but the district-wide distribution of those social characteristics constitutes the second layer of inequalities that condition the dynamics that form the schools as popular schools. In that sense, socio-spatial segregation patterns within Çankaya and Keçiören and the locational positions of the schools in the districts deserve further examination.

As stated above based on Yüceşahin & Tüysüz's study (2011) on the socio-spatial segregation patterns in Ankara, the level of socio-economic development decreases gradually towards the north of Keçiören, where the neighborhoods students from outside the jurisdictional area live are located. The more recent data also shows a similar pattern of segregation between the north and the south of Keçiören. The map below shows the geographical distribution of socio-economic status groups that is discussed to make comparison between Çankaya and Keçiören above.

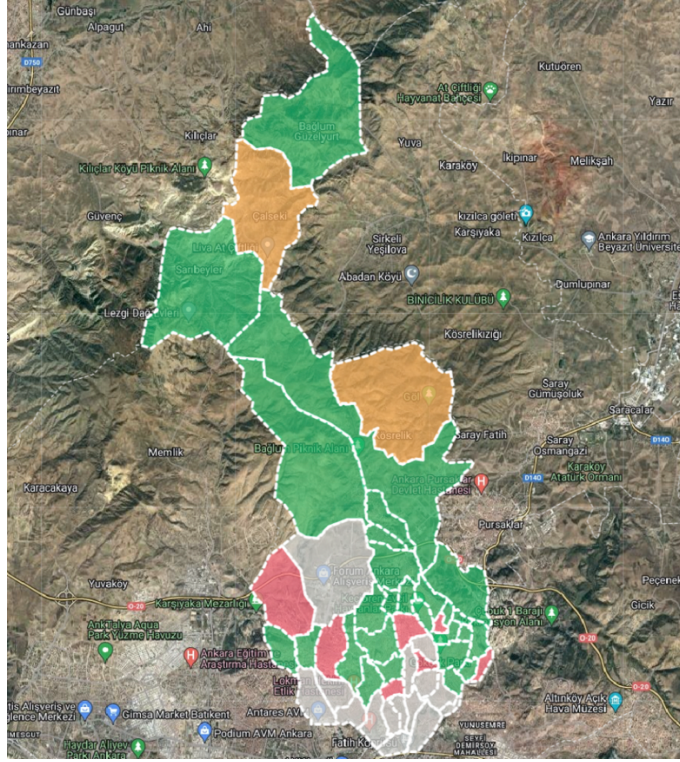


Figure 18: Distribution of socio-economic status in Keçiören
Source: www.endeksa.com

Neighborhoods located in the south of the district and shown in gray on the map are evaluated in Group A which indicates high socio-economic status. Ayvalı and Etlik Neighbourhoods where School B is located are in this group. The northern neighbors of these neighborhoods are shown in red and green, and evaluated in Group B and Group C respectively. The neighbourhoods where the students from outside the jurisdictional area of School B live such as Esertepe, Sancaktepe, İncirli are in Group C (green) while Yükseltepe is in Group B (red).

If we look at Çankaya based on the same data, we face with a different picture regarding the patterns of socio-spatial segregation. In Çankaya, it is more appropriate to talk about segregation at wider scale rather than neighborhood. As can be seen from the map below the concentration of the population that is placed in Group A (shown with grey on the map) which indicate high socio-economic status in the west is very distinct. The population in Groups C (shown with green) and D (shown with yellow) that indicate low socio-economic status is concentrated entirely in the south east of the district.

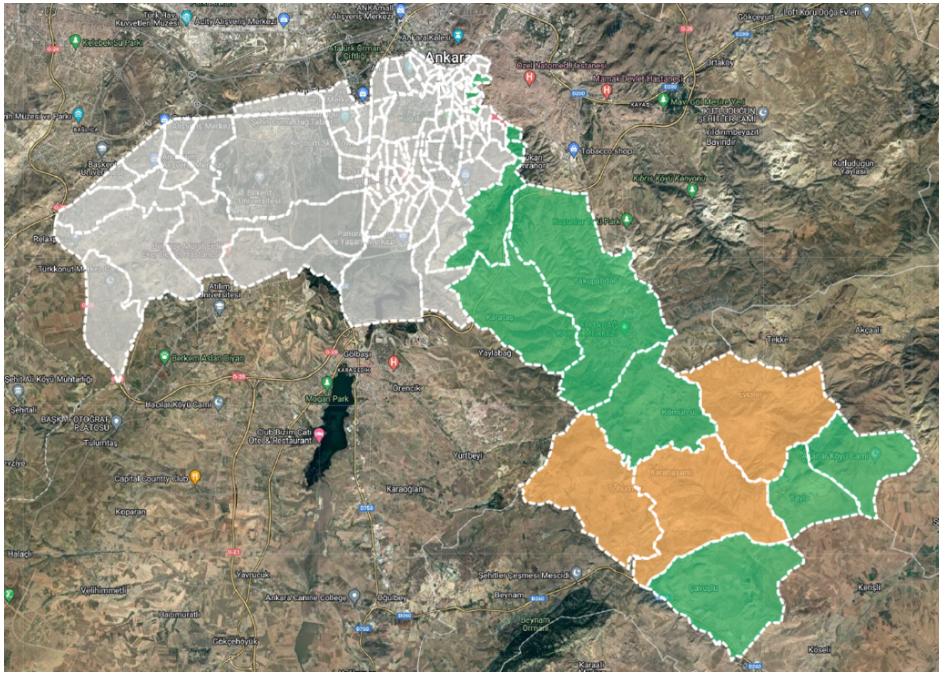


Figure 19: Distribution of socio-economic status in Çankaya
 Source: www.endeksa.com

The geographical distribution of socio-economic status within Keçiören and Çankaya supports the evaluation that is made above; domination of high socio-economic groups in Çankaya has a clear geographical expression, and different social groups are segregated on a larger scale in a way that create a social homogeneity within themselves. On the other hand, in Keçiören, the social groups are identified with a more heterogeneous geographical distribution.

These two-layered differences; 1) social compositional difference between Keçiören and Çankaya, and 2) district-wide social compositional differences between Çankaya and Keçiören is significant for the dynamics that differentiate the schools from other public schools, also how these dynamics varies between School A and School B. Çankaya is the focal point of economic and educational values, and the locational area of School A is where these values are concentrated in the district, in a way that form a certain homogeneity. Keçiören is in a subordinated position regarding the economic and educational values, compared to Çankaya. Although the locational area of School B is an area where the social groups with high socio-economic status live, this should be considered in relation to the subordinated position of Keçiören,

also to its relative proximity to the neighbourhoods with low socio-economic status. Therefore, to explore how similar mechanisms operate in different spatial contexts, I contextualize the schools and their locational areas within this two-layered geographical structure, since it is significant for the production of differences in the dynamics that form the schools as socio-spatial closures and in the geographical scale of this formation.

4.5. Presentation of the schools

As stated before, there is a strong “school effect” in Turkish educational system; which school is attended has a significant impact on the academic achievement of students. In that sense, sending their children to a “successful” school is crucial for most of the parents, but access to a “successful” school in public education is difficult in a highly competitive educational system funded and invested insufficiently by the state. Success of the schools, on the other hand, is mostly “correlated with the nation-wide exam results of the schools” (Kondakçı & Sivri, 2014, p. 256) due to the centrality of examination in the education system in Turkey. As revealed, the competition for entrance to quality high schools which is perceived as a guaranteed way for entrance to prestigious universities starts from primary education. In that sense, placement in a “good” middle school is crucial for a successful educational path. Interviews revealed that the recent change in the high school placement system which has increased the weight of address-based placement, has a triggering effect on the families’ desire for successful middle school. As finding a place in a “good” high school gets more difficult, a place in a “good” middle school becomes crucial for the families, as a result, parents become more eager to send their children to a “good school” wherever it is.

However, accessing objective information on success ranking of the public middle schools is very difficult in the absence of school league tables, and whether the schools’ success ranking is announced publicly or not changes frequently. Therefore, information about the success of the schools or their educational quality etc. is highly relied upon “grapevine knowledge” which is based on subjective experiences and embedded in social networks and localities (Ball & Vincent, 1998). This kind of a

knowledge about the schools' academic success is a product of an accumulation from the past. Past academic success of the schools comes today as reputation. This is important in two senses; firstly, the popularity/desirability of a school may not be fully explained by its material basis today, and how this reputation is reproduced should be considered. Secondly, the process of differentiation should be approached historically.

Both of the schools prove that one of the important dimensions behind the popularity can be found in the history of a school; they have a reputation regarding their success in high school entrance examination that is pointed out by most of the parents during the interviews, and their reputation is rooted in their past closely related to their establishment or selection by the state as exclusive schools.

Both of the schools were established in the 1990s. School A was established as a science and art center (BİLSEM) serving for high intelligence children. In those times, the school was attached to a foundation and a certain amount of donation was received for the enrolment. The school with this special status served to a certain group of families and became famous for its educational quality and success. It is understood that this reputation is an important source of its recognition and symbolic capital today. On the other hand, School B was declared pilot school twice in the 2000s and this was effective in gaining a certain recognition. Today parents still refer to pilot school times when they talk about the success of the school. How the reputation and symbolic capital of the schools are reproduced in relation to the strategies of the parents and professionals is important to understand the spatio-institutional dynamics of school differentiation process and will be examined in the next chapter, but before that the locational features of the schools regarding social composition and the schools' place in the distribution of educational supply will be detailed.

When we look at the basic indicators of schooling quality (Table 4), first thing to notice is that both of the schools are overcrowded; the number of students they have is well above their capacity. School B is much more crowded than School A despite having lower number of classrooms. This difference creates further distinction which

is another indicator of schooling quality; while School A is a full day school, education is provided in two shifts in School B.

Table 4: 2019-2020 academic year statistics of the schools

| | Number of Students | Number of Classroom | Number of Teachers | Number of Students per Classroom | Number of Students per Teacher |
|----------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| School A | 850 | 25 | 52 | 34 | 16 |
| School B | 1230 | 22 | 80 | 56 | 15 |

If we compare the indicators of the schools with the districts' (Table 5), it is seen that indicators for both of the schools are much higher than the average of the districts they located. Especially the student-to-classroom ratio in School A and School B is much higher than the averages of Çankaya and Keçiören respectively.

Table 5: Comparison of student-to-classroom and student-to-teacher ratios

| | Number of Students per Classroom | Number of Students per Teacher |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| School A/Çankaya/Ankara | 34/24/32 | 16/12/15 |
| School B/Keçiören/Ankara | 56/40/32 | 15/16/15 |

These statistics above suggest that popularity of the schools has determinants other than physical or infrastructural quality. The interviews support this; for example, one of the teachers in School A, while talking about the families' demand for enrolling their children to the school, expressed her astonishment to the high demand for the school "without even a gym", also crowded classrooms are the most frequently complained issue by the parents in School A. Similarly, the education provided in two shifts is the most complained issue by the parents in School B.

The statistics which are also supported by the interviews indicate that school differentiation, although has objective bases in the distribution of public educational investments, it is beyond that, the product of the spatio-institutional dynamics and mainly produced at the school level. This supports the two-layered geographical

approach to the educational inequalities which focuses on practices in the schools for creation of further inequalities by underlining their role in mediation between the structural inequalities arising from the uneven distribution of educational supply and demand.

The geographical expression of the variation faced in practice as a result of the schools' role of mediation can be grasped in the difference between the jurisdictional and catchment areas of the schools. Both of the schools have very high number of students coming out of their jurisdictional areas. While the rate of students out of the jurisdictional area is 68% in School A, it is 34% in School B (Table 6).

Table 6: 2019-2020 academic year statistics of the schools

| | Number of enrolled students | Number of enrolled students living in the jurisdictional area | Number of enrolled students living out of the jurisdictional area | Percentage of students living out of the jurisdictional area |
|----------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| School A | 190 | 60 | 130 | 68% |
| School B | 303 | 200 | 103 | 34% |

The difference between the schools in the percentages of the students coming from distance makes sense with the geographical width of the catchment areas and their social characteristics. Table 7 shows that while the catchment area of School A covers various neighborhoods from different districts of Ankara, the catchment area of School B mainly consists of neighborhoods of Keçiören and certain neighborhoods of Yenimahalle.

Table 7: Jurisdiction and catchment areas of the schools

| | Jurisdiction area | Catchment area (routes of school buses) |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| | | |

Table 7 (continued)

| | | |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| School A | Mustafa Kemal Mahallesi Söğütözü Mahallesi | Söğütözü-Beştepe: 80-90 students Sanayi Bakanlığı: 30 students DSİ – Sanayi Bak. Lojmanları: 32 students Barış Sitesi: 20 students Keçiören-Etlík-Yenimahalle: 35 students Uran Kent-Serhat Mahallesi: 18 students Etimesgut-Elvankent: 20 students Dikmen: 20-25 students + Other |
| School B | Some streets of Aşağı Eğlence Mahallesi, Ayvalı Mahallesi, Etlík Mahallesi | Ayvalı Bölgesi: 18+20 = 38 students Yükseltepe: 17+19 = 36 students Atapark Mah.: 20+18 = 38 students Çiğdemtepe: 17+21 = 39 students Şentepe: 18+17 = 35 students Esertepe: 17+21 = 38 students 19 Mayıs Mah. (İncirli): 18+21 = 39 students Pamuklar Mah: 16+19 = 35 students Basınevleri (Keçiören): 18+18 = 36 students + Other |

CHAPTER 5

LOGICS OF CLOSURE

If I repeat the question I asked at the beginning; why educational inequalities, specifically public school differentiation, exists and persists despite public investments on education? The answer of the thesis to this question rests on the concept of socio-spatial closure. With the concept of socio-spatial closure, the substantial effect of space in creation of educational inequalities is uncovered. It enables to regard exclusionary actions of the agents in the distributive struggle through the mediation of space.

Exclusionary actions of the agents are the key in creation of school differentiation, but social exclusion of the subordinate groups is achieved through space. Spatial divisions in the representations of the agents by naturalizing positional differences in distributional sense, contribute to the exclusion of subordinate groups. In that sense, space has a substantial effect on the formation and maintenance of social divisions in education.

The concept of socio-spatial closure bringing the spatial distribution of educational resources with respect to distribution of agents to the agenda ensures that the external relationship between the education system and social inequalities is overcome from the beginning. Competitive actions for access to the resources by excluding the subordinate social groups is firstly the actions for access to the resources unevenly distributed over the city space. Thus, the positions of the groups in the distributive struggle depend both to their social and geographical positions. Then, since the access to the educational resources is a matter of spatial access as well, maintenance of dominant position in the distributive struggle excluding the subordinate groups based on to prevent subordinate groups from spatial access. This is ensured within

the schools through the negotiations between the parents and professionals, especially the principals. Exclusion of subordinate groups is the exclusion from the schools spatially, and achieved through the agents' representations of spatial divisions functioning with the logic of exclusion/inclusion.

This chapter which intends to reveal the logic of closure within the theoretical framework of field, firstly focuses on the hierarchical structure of the field of schooling in Ankara and the positions of the popular public schools in this hierarchy. On the basis of the findings from the field research, it is claimed that hierarchical differentiation among the schools is not only dependent on academic success in objective sense, but also the parents' perceptions and representations of successful schools, so the hierarchical structure of the field is also symbolically determined and symbolic capital is one of the significant resources that determines the positions in the field of schooling in Ankara. Closely related with the symbolic dimension of hierarchical structure of the field, the geographical location of the schools has an important impact on their positions which reveals that geographical location is not only connected to the field through the distribution of social composition and educational provision, but also through its symbolic meaning.

The next section focuses on this symbolic meaning of space, also the trajectory of the schools' capitals as the determinants of popularity in order to reveal more clearly the symbolic dimension of school differentiation and formation of popular schools. It is claimed that for these schools, academic success mostly connotes with recognition, popularity or fame, and differentiation as popular school depends something beyond the academic success in objective sense, and long-term presence in the field is itself a source of symbolic distinction. However, it is also underlined that maintenance of the schools' position depends on the reproduction of both representational and objective bases of the distinction by the strategies and practices of the agents.

Before the discussion on how the distinct positions of the schools reproduced by the strategies of closure, the third section focuses on the agents in the schools as sub-fields, the agents' positions and attitudes towards the education, perceptions etc., and it is claimed that the parents' demands and practices in relation to the schools'

response to these demands and practices by the professionals shape the internal dynamics of the schools that differentiate them from other public schools.

The next section aims to develop this claim revealing that social composition is itself formed by the negotiations and struggles among the agents in relation to their exclusionary closure strategies. In that sense, the informal rules of access to these schools will be discussed through the examination of exclusionary closure strategies of parents to access better quality education and school principals to reproduce their symbolic capital and positions in the schooling field with the concept of socio-spatial closure. The difference in the strategies of the two groups of parents stemming mainly from their different geographical position with respect to the geographical distribution of educational supply and demand is also discussed and through this discussion, how the geographical space conditions the exclusionary closure strategies and make difference between the scale and dynamics of social closures within the two schools is revealed.

5.1. Methods

In order to explore the formation of popular schools, but in a space specific way, the research adopts comparative case study design. In order to select cases for comparison, I used quantitative data, statistics provided by MoNE on public and private schools, number of teachers, classrooms etc., in order to analyze the geographical distribution of educational investments in Ankara. After selecting districts and schools, qualitative methods were applied for data collection and semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted. Since based on the theoretical framework of the thesis I regard each school as field, I conducted interviews with the actors of both educational supply (school principals, deputy principals, teachers) and demand (parents). Moreover, before these interviews, I made brief interviews with school bus drivers in order to obtain information about the routes of the school service busses with a purpose to identify the catchment areas of the schools.

The first round of interviews was conducted in two schools between December 2019 and March 2020. In each school I firstly interviewed with school principals and

deputy principals, then with teachers and parents. The interviews were mostly conducted in the schools, and school gardens, except 4 interviews with parents of School A, I meet them outside the school (I interviewed two of them at their workplaces and two of them in cafes). Some interviews with teachers were group interviews conducted in the teachers' rooms. I also participate in the parent-teacher meetings of both schools as an observer.

After a long break that I had to give due to the Covid-19 pandemic, I started the second round of interviews in September 2021, and between September and December 2021, I interviewed with school principals and some deputy principals again, also with parents and teachers. In all, 59 interviews lasting between 15 and 75 minutes were conducted. I formed separate set of questions for each actor group; teachers, parents and principals.

Table 8: Number of participants

| Participants | Numbers |
|----------------------------|---------|
| School A (Çankaya) | |
| Principal | 1 |
| Deputy principal | 1 |
| Teachers | 13 |
| Parents | 9 |
| School B (Keçiören) | |
| Principal | 1 |
| Deputy principals | 3 |
| Teachers | 11 |
| Parents | 20 |
| Total | 59 |

The set of questions formed for the parents also included separate questions for those living in the neighborhood, those who moved to the neighborhood for school, and those living out of the jurisdictional area of the schools. Although the parents for the interviews were identified randomly, I paid attention to the balance between the

number of parents who live in the neighbourhoods and live out of the jurisdictional area of the schools. These numbers can be seen from the table below (Table 9).

Table 9: Participant parents by where they live

| Number of parents who live outside the neighbourhood and where they live | Number of parents who live in the neighbourhood | Number of parents who had moved to the neighbourhood for school and where they had moved from |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| School A (Çankaya) | | |
| 5 (Esertepe/Keçiören, Batıkent, Eryaman, Yaprıcık) | 2 | 2 (Keçiören, GOP) |
| School B (Keçiören) | | |
| 7 (Pamuklar, Esertepe, Yenimahalle, Şentepe, Sancaktepe, Etlik) | 8 | 5 (İncirli, Şentepe, Ufuktepe, Aşağı Eğlence) |

The main purpose of the interviews with parents was to explore their perception of schools, neighbourhoods, how and why they decide and reject schools, also the connection between these and their socio-economic status. Thus, the questions included both demographic questions such as where they live, occupation, educational level, and the questions about their perspectives on the other parents, neighbourhoods and schools. Similarly, interviews with teachers focused both on their perceptions about the parents, neighbourhoods etc., and their past experience, where they had worked before. They were also asked to compare the school with the schools where they worked before in terms of parent and student profile, school administration etc. In addition to these questions, interviews with school principals and deputy principals focused on the management style, problems they faced during the registration periods, school budgets, as well.

5.2. Socio-spatial field of schooling

This section focuses on the schooling field in Ankara which can be thought as organizational field, and the positions of the two schools in that field. Although the study deals with each of the school as sub-field in order to reveal the determinants

beyond the academic achievement of the game in micro-scale, the schools are part of the game ultimately determined by academic success. Hierarchy and competition which are the basic characteristics of the educational system in Turkey that is prone to create inequalities are the key terms that identify the schooling field in that sense.

As underlined in the previous sections, the state's limited and geographically uneven educational investments, also the residential address-based placement system that neglects the quality differences in educational services and socio-spatial segregation constitute the basis of the spatial inequalities in education, and contribute to the creation of hierarchical and competitive character of the field which means that hierarchy and competition have a strong spatial basis. Thus, this section aims to reveal how hierarchical and competitive structure of the education system manifest itself in the field of schooling in Ankara in the context of hierarchical differentiation among the schools, and the spatial expression of it. It is argued in this section that spatial inequalities in education are inherent in the hierarchical structure of the field of schooling.

5.2.1. Hierarchy and competition

In Bourdieusian sense, “fields are arenas of struggle for control over valued resources, and dominant and subordinate positions in the fields are determined according to the types and amount of capital” (Swartz, 1997, pp. 122-123). Thus, fields are structured hierarchically in that agents and institutions occupy dominant and subordinate positions, and the positions are determined by the types and volume of capitals possessed in relation to other agents and institutions.

The most valued type of capital in schooling field is cultural capital since the stake in the struggle in the field of schooling is academic success, but other types of capitals, social, economic and especially symbolic, are also crucial for the determination of the positions indicating a high convertibility among the capitals, also the significance of the perceptions of the agents in determining the hierarchical differentiation among the schools. Accordingly, to reveal the different positions in the schooling field, the agents' perceptions especially of academic success and the schools are considered.

In that sense, the hierarchical structure of the schooling field allows us to make a general distinction among the schools and divide them into three main groups regarding desirability which partly coincide with academic success in objective sense. At the top of this hierarchy there are few private schools, these are well-known schools which have a certain reputation, and at the bottom there are undesirable public schools which mostly serve to their neighbourhood population. In between, small scale private schools and popular/desirable public schools exist. Both of the schools can be evaluated in this group, so they place in the intermediate position in the field.

This hierarchical differentiation among the schools demonstrates that the division among the schools in the field of schooling is more complex than the generally assumed dual division between public and private schools. Both private and public schools differentiate in themselves hierarchically. Just as private schools are not identified with academic success as a general category, public schools are not identified with academic failure in the eyes of the parents. On the contrary, private schools, other than those in the dominant position are often considered less successful than popular public schools, and popular public schools are usually preferred by the parents to small-scale, less popular private schools. Parents often state that after the well-known private schools where they cannot afford to send their children, “good” public schools are the second-best option over other small-scale private schools.

I didn't think of private school, because I have to send to a good and quality private school, but I cannot afford it. Neighbourhood (mahalle arasi) private schools are not an option (P13, School B)

Their preference that prioritizes “good” public schools over small-scale private schools reveals the fact that the parents’ perceptions about academic success are highly exam-centric. The division made by the parents among the schools is highly related with the competitive character of the education system. It is understood from the statements of the parents that they make a distinction between academic success

at school and in the high school entrance exam, and being successful at school does not mean that a child will be successful in the exam especially for the small-scale private schools. They think that these schools are insufficient in terms of academic success, which is mainly thought as success in the central exams.

Big colleges are ok., but there is a private school, 3-4 houses away from me, my neighbor sends her child, she is satisfied, but I do not believe in it. They are exaggerated. Good private schools are very expensive, I have 2 kids, I can't send one and not send the other. My sister's son is supposedly a college graduate, its name is college, but he couldn't pass the university entrance exam (P5, School A)

The variation between the academic success at school and in the exam, comes from the fact that they think that success in these schools is not subject to realistic evaluations. According to them, although the infrastructural quality is high in these schools, the educational quality which is confirmed by success in the exam is not sufficient.

Researcher: What do you think about private schools?

Private schools, generally speaking, I don't talk about those above the bar, but the ones at the bottom just make you feel good. You feel good when you enter that building; the seats are nice, they welcome you well, they pass you well... The child is also very successful; the letter of appreciation is already 5 cents. Parents are also happy, they say that we send her/him to a college, our child is successful. One feels good, because that's how it is with us (P6, School A)

The idea that in this kind of private schools the grades are increased because they are focused on economic gain is common among the parents, and because of that the success in these schools is not valued by the parents.

I cannot say all private schools are good. I wouldn't even think private school if I could afford. A good public school is better than private schools since the grades are exaggerated in private schools. There are also good private schools, but like shopping malls they have sprung up lately (P8, School B)

This kind of small-scale private schools are the products of a more recent phenomenon of rapid increase in the number of private schools in Turkey. However, these schools, in the eyes of the parents, contradict with the exam-centered academic success orientation of the competitive education system, which is another common phenomenon in Turkey. They are newly established and cheaper than those well-established and popular in the dominant position in the field. When they make division among the two groups of private schools, the examples given by the parents to the “good” private schools are the schools with a reputation across the country, the schools which have been in the field of education for a long time.

Researcher: Why did you come from private school to public school?

I decided that private schools were businesses. Yes, the education is very high quality at TED, METU, Bilkent, these types of schools are yes, but others are like businesses (P7, School A)

This reveals that long-term presence in the field is an important factor that differentiate the schools. This is also the case for the differentiation among the public schools which will be detailed later through the popular public schools.

I don't see them [small-scale private schools] as schools. I see them as kindergartens, I think they only take care of the children. They have sprung up like mushrooms. Unfortunately, there is a private school in every neighborhood. I don't think they give good education. In other words, there are already certain private educational institutions in the country, they have made a name for themselves. I don't see anyone other than them really offering anything other than babysitting.

Researcher: Then, do you think that not all private schools are equally good?

Yes, definitely. If you can't send to those who have made a name, don't send your child to a private school. Public school is better, a good public school... (P14, School B)

With reference to Emirbayer and Johnson (2008), it can be asserted; the fact that being old in the field is an important determinant of the differentiation between the schools reveals that an important type of capital that determines positions in the field of schooling is symbolic capital. According to Emirbayer and Johnson,

not only the volume and composition of an organization's capital in the current state of the field, but also its trajectory within the field over time are relevant, symbolic authority often attached to the field's most venerable establishments rather than newcomers, challengers, or upstarts (2008, p. 12).

To sum up, the hierarchical structure of the field of schooling is determined by an exam-oriented evaluation of academic success, which is at the center of the competitive education system in Turkey, but beyond being objectively determined by success in the exam, being a successful school also means having symbolic authority that is often attributed to the schools which have existed in the field for a certain period of time. This means that private schools, whose numbers have grown rapidly in the last decade, do not meet their demands for “better quality education” which mostly refers to good exam preparation instruction. Thus, for these families who cannot afford to access prestigious private schools, small-scale private schools’ being out of options means increasing pressure for access to “good school” in public education sector with almost constant investments in the last decade. Being a “good school” highly depends on symbolic capital which is significant in the differentiation among the public schools and will be detailed later, but before that an elaboration on the types of capitals associated with different positions in the field will be provided.

“Within the configurations of power relations that constitutes a field, particular positions including those that mark the dominant and dominated poles of the field, can be analyzed in terms of the distinctive profiles of capital associated with them” (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008, p. 11). Although the main determinant is cultural capital in the field since academic success is the ultimate goal of the agents, social, economic and symbolic capitals have a significant effect on the determination of the positions as stated before. The convertibility of economic capital into cultural capital is very high in the field due to the fact that being successful in a highly competitive educational system requires additional efforts like private courses, private instruction centers, supplementary books, etc. that are dependent on economic power, although public schools are free. Social capital is also significant; it sometimes compensates

for limited economic capital of the agents and the schools. Symbolic capital, on the other hand, which can be treated as positive recognition and prestige has a special importance in differentiation of positions.

“When a form of capital is conferred with legitimacy and prestige, it becomes symbolic capital that adds weight to its import and status” (Threadgold, 2018, p. 44) It can be grasped that social, cultural and economic capitals are transformed into symbolic capital that attaches honor, celebrity and popularity to the schools in the field. For example, the dominant position of certain private schools depends also recognition by the agents without questioning the quality of education they offer. Similarly, popular public schools are distinguished from the neighbourhood schools which have a negative recognition semi-independently of their educational quality or success. “Objective differences, inscribed in material properties and in the differential profits these provide, are converted into *recognized distinctions* in and through the representations that agents form and perform of them” (Bourdieu, 2013, p. 297), so how the social, economic and cultural capitals transformed into symbolic capital which provides distinction to the schools is a crucial issue for the popular public schools and will be discussed in the context of determinants of popularity. However, before that the spatial expression of the hierarchical structure of the schooling field in Ankara will be revealed since the positions of the schools in the geographical field are crucial for the transformation of objective differences into recognized distinctions through the representations of the agents. In other words, the geographical positions of the schools are not only significant in objective sense, in terms of determining the social composition, but also crucial in terms of the agents’ perceptions and representations that refers to the symbolic meaning of space.

5.2.2. Spatial expression of hierarchical structure of the schooling field

The province wide educational inequalities, differentiation among the districts of Ankara stemming from the uneven distribution of public investments on education together with the geography of demand side differences that is the geographical distribution of social composition constitute an important determinant of different positions. In other words, the hierarchical structure of the schooling field expresses

itself as hierarchical differentiation among the districts and this is in conformity with the uneven geographical distribution of educational supply and demand which are the first and the second axes that connect space to the schooling field.

As stated before, the parents' strategies of access to better quality education that is revealed as exclusionary closure strategies in the thesis are responses to the structural inequalities which have a strong spatial basis regarding the state's limited and geographically uneven educational investments, also the residential address-based placement system that neglects the quality differences in educational services and socio-spatial segregation. The expression below is significant to show how these structural inequalities push parents to seek better quality education:

There is a high school right across my house, I do not want to send my child there. Why don't I want? It is said that both the teachers and the education are not good. If all schools were equal, I would not look for a school. Since they are not equal, I am carrying the children here. The teachers are also different, the teacher coming to School A is very different, the teacher coming to Batikent is very different (P5, School A)

Similarly, the expressions of another parent in School A provide a good illustration to how the structural inequalities are responded by the parents, also demonstrates how their responses are dependent upon their positions in the field determined by the capitals possessed.

Even if you send your child to public school, your economic conditions must be good. If you do not have a certain level of economic resources, you will send your child to the nearest school, wherever it is, so you have no other way. Here, all schools must be of the same quality, they must provide the same quality education so that we do not make such a distinction, and look for school (P8, School A)

As can be seen from the quotes above, actions of the parents for access to better quality education, which will be shown to be exclusionary later, are mediated by the spatial inequalities led by the uneven geographical distribution of the educational supply. Spatial match between the educational demand and supply depends on the

parents' ability to access which is also dependent upon their geographical position with respect to distribution of supply. This is how the competitive action that creates the school hierarchy is generated hierarchically.

Çankaya where the public and private educational investments, and agents who have higher volume of economic and cultural capitals are concentrated has a dominant position, while the districts whose disadvantageous positions regarding educational investments are detailed in the previous chapter and which have subordinated positions in the city-wide hierarchical structure of the objectified social space such as Mamak, Sincan, Keçiören, Altındağ are in the subordinated position in the schooling field.

For example, the deputy principal in School A asserts that we can talk about a hierarchy among districts, and Çankaya is at the top of this hierarchy. She explains that this does not mean that there are no good schools in other districts, but the parents' also the professionals' expectations in other districts are different than academic success due to the different social profile in other districts. Thus, actually she says that schools in other districts are in subordinate position in the schooling field where positions are ultimately determined by academic success. According to her, in other districts, for example Sincan or Keçiören, rather than academic success, the expectation of parents is to prevent their children to cause or be exposed to trouble.

In other districts, such as Keçiören, there are good schools, but the students are troubled and they [the schools] struggle a lot with disciplinary problems. They [parents and professionals in other districts] say, for example, that it is enough for the child not to cause trouble, instead of focusing on the academic success. For example, student stabs someone outside of the school, what will they do with success? Thus, they say no one gets stabbed, it is enough. The different thing there is their material [student profile]... (DP, School A)

High immigrant population, especially the Syrians in the schools in other districts is mentioned by her as the marker of difference. Thus, other districts' low-ranking position in education is linked to their social profile with low socio-economic status and diverse ethnic/racial composition of their population. According to her, parents

with high socio-economic status living out of Çankaya do not send their children to the neighbourhood schools, they prefer either a public school here (Çankaya), or a private school. In that sense, the top position of Çankaya is connected to the parents with higher socio-economic status who live in or able to access to the district.

The most important district in Ankara is Çankaya (in educational sense). No one can get ahead of Çankaya. Other districts are good in themselves, but Çankaya is number one. It is also number one in Turkey (DP, School A)

This hierarchical differentiation, especially the dominant position of Çankaya is approved by the interviewees in School B in Keçiören.

Researcher: Are the schools in Çankaya more successful?

Sure. The better the economic power, the more successful it will be. For example, if I had money, I would send my child to the courses. I don't have money to send him there [Çankaya], even the rents are different; 2000 TL there [Çankaya], 700-800 TL here (P4, School B)

As can be seen from the quote above, the link between the socio-economic status of the parents and school success is very clear and strong. The socio-economic status is connected to the academic success through private courses, or supplementary books as can be seen from the quote below:

I've heard from my friends, they [schools in Çankaya] are in higher level. The reason is this; they are not content with one book, they increase the quality with more supplementary books (P2, School B)

Spatial expression of the hierarchical structure of the field of schooling in Ankara indicates that the district where the school is located significantly affects its position since it objectively structures the social composition in the school. Moreover, to the extent that the geographical location is differentiating, especially among public schools, it reinforces the distinction between intermediate and subordinate positions, between popular and unpopular public schools. In that sense, it is reasonable to expect that unpopular public schools serving to their neighborhood population are mostly located in the districts other than Çankaya, such as Mamak, Altındağ, Keçiören which are in subordinated position. However, since not all the public

schools in Çankaya are popular, and not all the public schools in other districts are unpopular (otherwise we would not be able to talk about the popularity of School B), hierarchical differentiation among the districts (province-wide inequalities) is explanatory for the hierarchical differentiation among the schools up to a point. At this point, socio-spatial segregation at district level should also be considered. This refers to the neighbourhood scale; the position of the neighbourhood where the school is located in relation to the other neighbourhoods in the district has a significant effect on the position of the school in the field of schooling.

For example, almost in every interview in School A including the interviews with parents and teachers, certain public schools are mentioned as popular schools and when we look at the location of these schools, it is seen that they all located in the southwestern axis of the city and in the affluent neighbourhoods of Çankaya (Figure 20).



Figure 20: Popular public schools in Çankaya mentioned in School A

Similarly, in School B, the public school which is mentioned as popular school alternative to School B in Keçiören by the parents and the teachers is located very close to School B, so in an affluent neighbourhood of the district when compared to the other neighbourhoods (Figure 21).

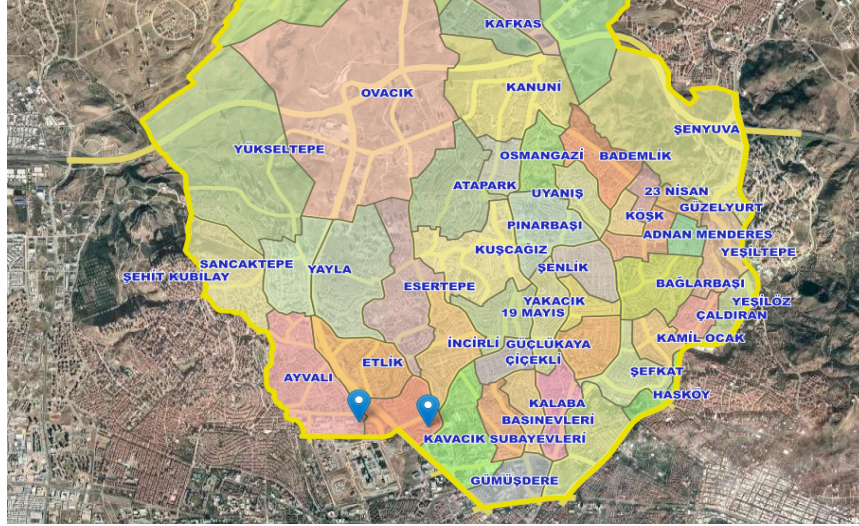


Figure 21: Popular public schools in Keçiören mentioned in School B

On the other hand, geographical location regarding the district where a school is located become an additional differentiating layer within intermediary position itself, among the popular public schools, that is an important line of differentiation between School B and School A. The expression of a teacher in School B is striking in that sense: “We are good, but an average school in Çankaya is better than us” (DP1, School B).

Province-wide educational inequalities, uneven geographical distribution of educational supply together with demand (social composition) side inequalities is inherent in the hierarchical structure of the field, to the extent that it determines the position of the schools against each other in the field. However, hierarchical differentiation among the districts in distributional sense should be considered together with the district-wide distribution of educational demand in order to explain the dynamics of the differentiation especially among the popular public schools.

It can be seen from the quotes above that the geographical location is mostly associated with social composition. The dominant position of Çankaya depends on the higher level of economic and cultural capital possessed by the agents who concentrate in Çankaya. This explains the higher level of cultural capital and academic success associated to the district schools.

However, when the district-wide inequalities are considered, it can be argued that the relationship of schools with their geographical locations is not established in the context of social composition directly, the social composition and schools' position in the field is more complex in two sense; 1- Not the social composition itself but its relation with the institutional dynamics and educational practices differentiate the schools. For example, the deputy principal's (School A) expression reveals this complex relationship:

Good schools have to concentrate in Çankaya, because you have to work here, if you don't, they work you over. For example, a teacher comes from Mamak and cannot adapt here. A teacher comes from Keçiören, he says how is this a school? A teacher cannot sit here (DP, School A)

Indeed, spatio-institutional dynamics have an impact (direct and indirect) on the formation of the social composition in the popular schools that will be discussed later within the framework of socio-spatial closure. 2- While the location (partly) structures the schools as fields objectively, it also determines the practices of the agents through the symbolic representations. For instance, luxury houses around or other signs of top position in the geographical field, having influence on the perceptions of the parents about the social profile in the schools increase the desirability of the schools.

Therefore, spatial location is important also in symbolic sense, in terms of image and symbolic meaning in differentiating the schools that is the fourth axis connects space and field. This is more clearly grasped through each of the schools, and will be discussed as one of the symbolic dimensions of school differentiation in the field.

5.3. Determinants of popularity

As stated before, each school is part of the game ultimately determined by academic success in the field of schooling, but academic success is not easily measured, also there is no list available in which the performance of all schools in the high school entrance exam as the most basic indicator of academic success can be found and compared. The authorities intentionally hide information that would allow schools to

be compared on success to prevent excessive demand for certain schools. Therefore, success mostly connotes with recognition, popularity or fame, and differentiation as popular school depends something beyond the academic success in objective sense. The schools' being popular is strongly related with their image, and recognition by the agents. This means that the struggle for academic success is also a struggle over symbolic capital for the schools. Locational areas of the schools, and the trajectory of the schools' capital are two important issues that will be discussed regarding the symbolic dimension of differentiation.

5.3.1. Geographical location

Geographical location of the schools should be considered in two levels as discussed above; geographical location of the schools in district level that effects the schools' positions in the schooling field of Ankara in relation to the province-wide inequalities should be considered in relation with the geographical location of the schools in neighbourhood level when explaining the district-wide inequalities that is produced within the schools. It should be taken into account that being in an affluent neighborhood of Keçiören and of Çankaya creates different dynamics in terms of their differentiation as popular schools. In other words, constraining or enabling effect of the position of the district where the schools are located in terms of province-wide inequalities should not be overlooked when looking at the school and its surroundings for the creation of district-wide inequalities.

As stated before, the relationship between the social composition of the locational areas of the schools, in other words, the position of their location in the city-wide hierarchically structured objectified social space, and the position of the schools in the schooling hierarchy is complex. The objective basis of this argument is the fact that only limited part of the neighbourhood population attends these schools, and a significant number of their students reside in different neighbourhoods, even in different districts. Out of neighbourhood students are proportionately 34% in School B and 68% in School A. In this regard, the effect of symbolic meaning of the locational areas (neighbourhoods) of the schools is stronger than their objective

effect. For example, a mother in School B who stated that they moved to the neighbourhood for the school explains:

When you look at the neighborhood, you say that rents are 1500 TL, house prices are 750,000 TL, new buildings... You say that the income level is high, you can get along, but you see that everyone thought so. They come here by some illegal ways, and then your expectations are not met (P14, School B)

As can be seen from the quote above, although affluent surrounding area has a limited effect on the social composition in the school, it is significant for the image of the school. What the fact that the school is located in an affluent neighborhood symbolically means about educational processes is detailed by her as follows:

I say, for example, who can give 750,000 Liras? You think that husband and wife are working, a middle-class civil servant, a doctor, a nurse, a teacher. What does it mean? In a problem with any classmate, when you call the parent, you think that you can talk to that person more easily (P14, School B)

The variation between the neighbourhood population and the schools' population also indicates that the social composition of the popular public schools itself is a subject of negotiations and struggles, it is formed directly or indirectly by the spatio-institutional dynamics that forms the schools as sub-fields. This issue is discussed in more detail later, but if we return to the symbolic meaning of the locational areas of the schools, it should firstly be stated that the neighbourhoods that both of the schools are located are relatively affluent neighbourhoods compared to other neighbourhoods of the districts.

Being decent (nezih), elite etc. are the most emphasized characteristics about the neighbourhoods both in School B and Schools A, and these characteristics are also pointed as the reason of the high demand that the schools receive by most of the interviewees. The presence of various ministries and public institutions around the school increases the symbolic value of the locational area for School A (Figure 22).

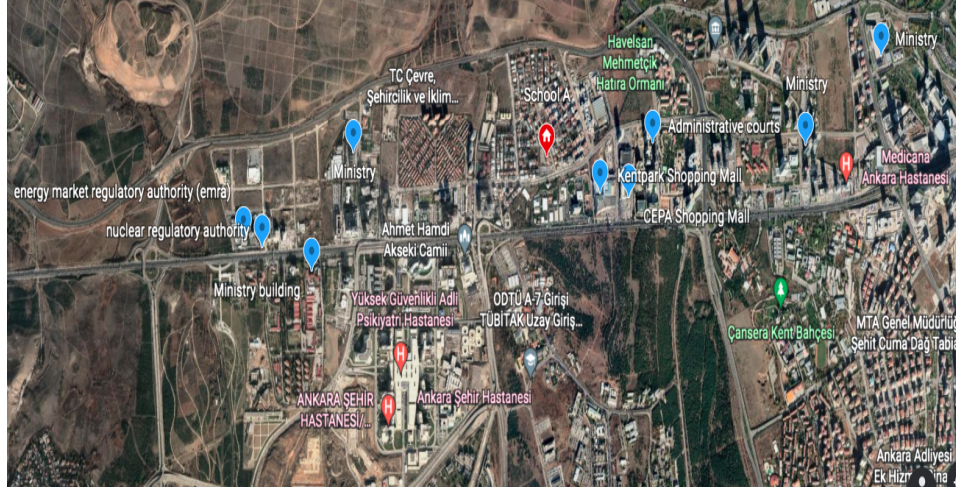


Figure 22: Locational area of School A

Hospitals (GATA, Etlik City Hospital and Zübeyde Hanım Hospital) and university building have a similar meaning for School B (Figure 23).



Figure 23: Locational area of School B

Ministries, public institutions, hospitals, university building give an idea about the parents' social composition based on occupation.

First of all, the school is close to GATA, close to the center, there is a university building nearby. Academicians or doctors, if they are not looking for a private school, they come to this school. That is, there are no behavioral problems, academic success is high, teachers are of high quality (T2, School B)

In addition to that, central location, shopping mall nearby, luxury housing estates etc. indicating a top position in the geographical field symbolizes a similar position in the schooling field for both of the schools. The locational characteristics of the schools in relation to the city-wide social segregation, so their position in the geographical field is mentioned by the teachers and principals as much as the parents as the reason why they chose the schools. For example, the expressions of one of the deputy principals who has been working at School B for less than one year reveal both the effect of location in her choice, and how the social hierarchies are expressed in the schools through the perception about the locational areas. She states, demonstrating the limited objective effect of the locational area, as follows:

It is effective to have beautiful housing estates around, easy to access, close to everywhere. I also considered the location while choosing this school. Having a shopping mall next to it, house prices and rents, etc., they also affect the school. In fact, many of your parents may not be from the neighborhood, they probably send their children to private schools, but luxury housing estate around, shopping malls still make it perceived as good school (DP2, School B)

The symbolic meaning of the locational areas of the schools do not only arise from the proximity to the rare and desirable agents and goods, but also from distance to the undesirable. In other words, shopping malls, luxury houses, central location etc. also symbolize absence of the undesirables such as Syrians or Ethiopians (in School B).

For example, in School A, frequently used expressions about the locational area of the school such as “an area where no one can enter”, “not everyone can enter” reveal the role of the spatial location in shaping the school as an exclusive place, so the spatial dimension of the social closure strategies of the parents. According to the teachers in School A, one of the important reasons of the desirability of the school among other schools is Syrian-free student population, despite a large number of Syrians in other public schools. According to them, the reason of this situation is the prosperous vicinity of the school, they cannot stay here due to the high housing prices and rents: “*There are no Syrians here. Syrians cannot come here because the rents are high. They cannot give 4000 Liras*” (DP, School A).

Similarly, being distant from the deprived areas (*varoşlara uzak*) is highlighted by the teachers when they pointed to the locational area of School B as one of the most significant reasons of the desirability of the school, although they are not that far physically.

If you go 5 km upward, it differs 30 years, they are behind. Here is the border of Yenimahalle and Keçiören, easy to access, very central, there is no shopping mall in the center of Keçiören, for example, it starts from here (T1, School B)

In School B, rather than physical distance, what creates distance from certain groups such as Syrians, Ethiopians or *gecekondulus*, is that rents and housing prices are high, when compared to the rents and housing prices in other neighbourhoods of the district, due to the central location, which inevitably results in exclusion of these groups like in School A. At this point, it can easily be said that the internal dynamics of the schools that shape them as exclusive places excluding some groups starts from the neighbourhoods they located. In that sense, the agents' exclusionary strategies of social closure turn into socio-spatial closure with the contribution made by the exclusionary effect of the schools' spatial locations.

5.3.2. Trajectory of capitals

Another issue which is crucial regarding the symbolic dimension of differentiation is the trajectory of the schools' capital. As argued before, "grapevine knowledge" that is based on subjective experiences and product of an accumulation through the history of a school provides (un)popularity that has limited objective basis today. Being a pilot school deserves further discussion in this context.

The issue was included in the context of the role of the state's educational investments in school differentiation before. As stated, the pilot schools selected by the state for the implementation of policy reforms or projects differ from other schools to the extent that this requires resources to be transferred to these schools according to the subject of the reform or the project. Although this form the objective

basis of differentiation, being a pilot school often means something beyond this objective meaning for the evaluation of academic success.

For example, in School B most of the interviewees including teachers point out that the school was a pilot school as the reason why it is so preferred. However, it is understood that they do not have clear information about within which project the school was selected as a pilot or exactly when it was selected, and even whether it is still a pilot school.

I'm talking about 10-12 years ago, there was a European Union project, it became a pilot school at that time, that's the biggest reason why it was so popular.

Researcher: Could you give some more information about the issue of being pilot school?

I do not know the details, but a cooperation has been made with the EU. A group of students went abroad from here, that's all I know (T10, School B)

The expressions of a mother in School B demonstrates how the knowledge of being a pilot school is transmitted through local social networks as “grapevine knowledge” with limited objective basis, and based on the subjective representations of parents.

Researcher: Why did you choose this school?

Teachers. There were teachers my husband knew; he is an educator. We heard from our primary school teachers, from the circle of friends, usually the parents hear from each other, so we chose this school. Besides, it is a pilot school.

Researcher: It was declared as a pilot school in the past, but...

I don't know if it still is (P19, School B)

Rather than its objective meaning, being a pilot school is symbolically important. The symbolic meaning of being a pilot school reveals what Emirbayer and Johnson (2008) assert about the symbolic authority in the organizational field highlighting the temporal aspect of capital; the trajectory. As stated in the context of differentiation among the private schools before, long-term presence in the field of schooling and

symbolic capital possessed accordingly has a crucial impact on the differentiation of the schools as popular schools. In that sense, it is no coincidence that both schools are old, and this connotes with being well established in the perceptions of the parents.

The fact that the school was once selected as pilot school function as an indicator of past academic success semi-independently from the present state, and becoming a *recognized distinction* through the representations that agents form and perform, reproduces the popularity. One of the deputy principals in School B for example, after stating that “at first, it was a pilot schools, a school that made a name for itself” explains: *I have heard that too, I don't know to be honest. I have such a knowledge spread by word of mouth, like an urban legend* (DP2, School B)

Although the principal tries to clear up the misunderstanding about being a pilot school, she also only knows the recent pilot implementation the school is included, but it is understood from the interviews that the school was selected as a pilot school in scope of an EU project in the past.

Actually, this is a misconception among parents. It is not a pilot school; it is only included in the pilot implementation in informatics and production. This is about coding, this year will be the third year. Other than that, there is nothing else. Actually, there is no such thing, I also tell the parents, but... it's just a rumor circulating among the parents (Principal, School B)

Another teacher who has been working at the school for 17 years refers to the past implementation of pilot school, and his expressions are striking in terms of demonstrating how the parents reproduce the distinction through their representations:

Researcher: It is often mentioned that this school is a pilot school as the reason why it is in demand, do you have information?

Well, there was a project in the past, 7-8 schools in Ankara were selected, this school was a pilot in Keçiören. There is nothing else, this is the urban legend produced by the parents themselves. They glorify the school in their

own way, then they feel good since they send their children to such a school. There is no difference, that project has already been over (T6, School B)

He continues to demonstrate how the symbolic capital of the school is reproduced through the representations that the parents form and perform:

*They created an urban legend; they believed in it. Success seems high as good kids from other schools also come to this school, but the teacher makes an effort by thinking that I am in a good school. But rather than the teachers, **the name of the school** brings the students here. It was supposedly the best school in Keçiören, the 3rd best school in Ankara... There is no such thing actually, as I said, they create something, they believe in it (T6, School B)*

Although it has not been a pilot school, the same is relevant for School A through its establishment as a science and art center (BİLSEM) serving for high intelligence children. As some teachers emphasized, it is still believed to be the case among parents although the science and art center moved to another place. The establishment of the school as a distinct school has been an important reason of demand since its establishment, and the school has been serving to the population out of the neighborhood since then.

“Proving itself”, “making a name”, “having a name”, “brand” are frequently used terms when the parents, also the teachers and the principal talk about the current state of the school, and refer to the *recognized distinction* that the school gained with this distinct establishment history. In the reproduction of this symbolic capital on the other hand, representations of not only the parents but also the teachers, and especially the principal are crucial. “*It is a privilege to work and study at School A. It is a brand. We still maintain that brand...*” (Principal, School A). He also answers the question of whether the reputation of the school since its establishment is still felt today:

That reputation continues. How? For example, it continues for us. When I go somewhere, and say I am a school principal, they ask me where? When I say School A, their attitudes change immediately. They say my teacher welcome... I'm just a teacher after all, but it doesn't work like that here. It is the same for the students and the teachers (Principal, School A)

The trajectory of the schools' capital includes the maintenance of both the representational and objective bases of the distinction, and these two feed each other. Maintenance of distinction, so popularity of the schools, depends not only on the representational reproduction, but also on the practices formed accordingly. The idea of trajectory in Bourdieu's theory contains this dynamic understanding of position. The point underlined by Threadgold about the concept of trajectory, the term's informing us that "one's class position is a result of struggle and strategy, not passivity" (Threadgold, 2018, p. 46) is also valid for the positions of the popular public schools; their distinct positions dynamically reproduced by strategies of the agents.

The two significant determinants of popularity, the symbolic meaning of the locational areas of the schools and the trajectory of the capitals are common for both schools. However, their different geographical positions in the hierarchical structure of the schooling field (province-wide inequalities) leads a clear distinction: While School B is popular in Keçiören or in an area composed of Keçiören and some neighbourhoods of Yenimahalle, School A is popular in Ankara. How this scalar difference is produced will be revealed through the examination of the spatio-institutional dynamics of each school comparatively that requires to focus on the practices of the agents in the schools as sub-fields.

5.4. School as a socio-spatial field

Regarding each school as sub-field will demonstrate how these schools located in the different districts within the hierarchical schooling field are formed with different socio-spatial dynamics. These are discussed later to demonstrate how they are formed hierarchically although both represent creation of school hierarchy by the competitive action of the parents. This section on the other hand, focuses more on the common dynamics that differentiate them from other public schools. While revealing the positional differences between the two groups of parents, the commonalities will be discussed in the context of differentiation of these schools from other public

schools as a result of mutual practices of the parents in their search for exclusivity and the professionals in their ensuring educational quality as response to the demands of the parents.

5.4.1. Question of social composition

As discussed before, social composition in the schools is important in terms of achievement and demand for the schools. Middle-classes tend to choose middle-class schools with both academic and social concerns, and this is how school segregation and socio-spatial segregation reinforce each other. The spatiality of education is mostly discussed regarding social composition, as such, the position of the neighborhood in socially segregated geography determines the position of the school. In the studies on spatiality of educational inequalities in Turkey, the comparison between the schools located at neighbourhoods with different social characteristics indicates a similar tendency. However, as stated, neighbourhoods have limited effect on the social compositions of these schools, but have significant effect on their image and popularity. Social composition in the schools on the other hand, depends on institutional dynamics as well as socio-spatial segregation patterns on a wider geographical scale than neighbourhood. That the significant number of parents come to the schools from different neighbourhoods and districts requires to consider not only the neighbourhoods the schools are located but also the neighbourhoods and the districts the parents come from regarding both social composition and available educational supply.

Parents in both of the schools are the ones who cannot send their children to the prestigious, well-known private schools mostly because of the economic reasons, but can avoid neighbourhood schools. Thus, first of all their structurally intermediate positions in the hierarchy of the schooling field should be underlined. Although they do not have enough economic capital to go to the private schools, they have enough to go to a distant school. Here, social and cultural capitals they possess are also crucial since manipulating the regulations and evaluating the schools requires knowledge about the education system and social networks, so a certain level of cultural and social capital (Ball, 2003).

The strategies they adopt to access to the schools provides to make evaluation about the capitals they possess. Overall strategies are as follows:

1. False residential address declaration: a- to use a relative's address living close to the school, b- to rent a flat or to declare the address of an empty flat in the neighbourhood before the registration period.
2. False workplace address declaration: If one parent is working, the other parent declares a workplace (mostly a relative's or a friend's) address in the enrolment area.
3. Calls from bureaucrats/politicians
4. Apart from these, moving to a house in the enrolment area is also common among some parents.

The most common strategy is false address declaration, the parents usually show their children as guests in their relatives' houses in the neighbourhoods, or they declare the address of an empty flat in the neighbourhoods giving some amount of money to a real estate agent. While the first one is more common in School B, in School A the second strategy is more commonly applied by the parents.

In School B, for example, the principal states that in the registration periods, 5-6 children are seen in the houses. She also states that in the registration periods, they receive calls from ministers, deputies or their advisors to register their acquaintances' or their own children. Moving to a house around the schools is also understood to be common, especially among the parents who do not have a relative or a friend who live close to the school, so those lack of social capital. This requires a certain level of economic capital since the houses around the school are more expensive than their houses depending on the neighbourhoods they live, but the fact that they prefer cheaper houses to move indicates that they differ from those already living in the neighborhood economically. Around School B, lower priced old houses and high priced newly built luxury houses coexist. For example, a mother who has moved to the neighbourhood for the school states:

The houses here are older, for example, those who come to live here come because of the school. Here the houses are old, the living room is not independent. The houses are not so good

Researcher: But I came from that side, it seemed like there are a lot of new houses.

Some parts are like that, but you can't live there anyway. They are very expensive. Those who live there don't come here anyway, they go to private school. Their income level is higher; they don't come here (P2, School B)

The quote above demonstrates that the social composition of the neighbourhood the school is located is more heterogeneous socio-economically especially when compared to School A. The parents of School B who are able to come to the neighbourhood either by moving to a house or by school bus service (by declaring false address) socially positioned between those who live in the new, luxury houses in the neighbourhood and those who live in their neighbourhoods but cannot send their children to the school due to insufficient economic resources. Similarly, the statement of another parent who moved to the neighborhood for the school reveals the positional difference with those who live in the neighborhood they come from: *“For example, I rented out my own house, I'm living in a rented house here. Rents are lower there, even the worst house here costs more here”* (P3, School B)

Their intermediate position between those who send their children to private schools and those who have to send their children to the neighbourhood schools is objectified in physical space through old apartments buildings, or through their daily spatial mobility for those who adopt strategies other than moving to a house in the neighbourhood. Since the catchment area of School B is more limited, the comparison between the positions of the parents in relation to their geographical positions gains a more local character when compared to School A. In School A, since the catchment area of the school is spread across the city, comparison between the positions of the parents in the school by looking at the relation between their geographical positions and social positions is possible province-wide.

Among the parents of School A, it is much more common to rent a house or giving money to a real estate agent and declare the address of that house. For example, the

principal emphasizes that this has turned into rent mechanism for the real estate agents. This clearly indicates a higher volume of economic capital based on the rents and housing prices in the Mustafa Kemal Neighbourhood. Although not as common as in School B, declaration of a false address through a relative is also seen in School A. Interestingly, false address declaration including both of the ways is widely adopted by the parents who have the right to register their children to the School A since they work in the public institutions around the school. The reason is the high demand for the school:

Researcher: Actually, you are two working parents, did not you have the right to register directly?

Since the school received high demand, we would have a risk to draw. We changed the address in order to eliminate it through a close family friend, our address remained there for one year. I went to the school when the child was in the fourth grade in primary school, I said I'm thinking about to enroll my child in this school, what are your registration conditions? They said that if both parents are working, the child can directly register here through the workplace address of a parent, but there is a high demand, if you stay above the quota, you will be drawn into the lot. I didn't want to leave that to chance either (P9, School A)

Certain level of cultural, social and economic capital that is required to be able to access to the schools forms their structural difference with those who live in the neighbourhoods they come from. On the other hand, in order to examine the positional differences between the parents of the two schools, occupational profiles provide insight.

Parents of both schools have a mixed occupational profile but while in School A, a significant number of parents are working at the ministries and public institutions around the school, in School B, prominence of tradesmen can be seen. Majority of the students in School A are able to enroll in school because their parents work in the surrounding workplaces. Due to the presence of public institutions, ministries and courthouses in the vicinity, parents mostly consist of those who are working at those places; civil servants, judges, lawyers etc. Since both parents have to work in order to register to the school through the workplace address of one parent, mainly both of the parents are working in School A. In School B, on the other hand, although there

are nurses, doctors and academicians among the families due to the nearby university building and hospitals, it is understood that their number is much less than the tradesmen, also unlike School A, mothers are mostly not working.

When the strategies, occupational profiles, also educational levels are considered it can be asserted that the volume of cultural capital is higher among the parents in School A, the same is harder to say for economic capital, but it can be said that while the economic capital is more evenly distributed among the parents in School A, it is more uneven in school B, so regarding socio-economic status of parents, a more homogenous profile is seen in School A, while the profile is heterogeneous in this sense in School B.

Due to the parents' similarity in terms of the volume of cultural and economic capital they possess, the structural positions of the parents in School A are close. The exception is the janitors, also the ones who are working in service sector at restaurants or shopping mall around the school whose number is understood to be very low. In almost every interview in School A, parents and teachers pointed out very small number of children of janitors live and work at the apartment buildings around the school as the distinct examples to the similar socio-economic profile, but underlining their small number (one or maximum two students in each class) it is stated that their exceptional position is tolerated; they are supported by other parents when needed.

Despite the highly broad coverage of the catchment area of the school that is composed of different neighbourhoods and districts having different positions in the geographical field, the homogenous profile in the school can be explained with the similarity of occupational positions of the parents due to the surrounding workplaces up to a point. However, homogenous profile is not such a technical issue but a product of exclusionary strategies of agents based on their social and educational classifications and distinctions which are at the same time highly spatial. Although the catchment area of the school is more limited, and parents come from relatively close neighbourhoods, the social homogeneity is more limited in School B when compared to School A. Almost all the parents who come from out of jurisdictional

area of School B, outsiders, live in certain neighbourhoods like Yükseltepe, Esertepe, Şentepe with similar social profile and similarly distinct from the neighbourhood the school is located. On the other hand, the thing that create a homogeneity in a certain extent in the social profile of parents is the capitals they possess, especially the economic capital that allow them to come. However, what makes a distinction among the parents in the school is cultural capital, especially in embodied form, which is strongly related with the neighbourhoods they come or live.

Socially more homogeneous profile in School A and heterogeneous profile in School B is compatible with the district-wide socio-spatial segregation patterns, but rather than determine the social composition in the schools in a static way, the districts are important in relation to the parents' ability to move which is highly dependent on capitals they possess, but can be evaluated separately. For example, although the significant number of parents in School A are not living in Çankaya, they have daily access due to their workplaces. Thus, in terms of space they engage through daily mobilities (situation capital) is also effective on their access to the school. The parents in School B on the other hand, mostly live and work in Keçiören, so besides their social, cultural and economic capitals, the space they can engage and educational services in that space is also effective on their ability to access.

Moreover, as I will discuss in more detail later, social composition of the schools cannot be evaluated by itself in creating school hierarchy or determining the school's position in this hierarchy. As stated, formation of popular public schools, including their social composition is a product of reciprocal practices of the parents and the professionals. Since the demand for these schools is so high, the formation of social composition is ultimately the result of elimination of demand in a selective way. What is decisive in this elimination is the perceptions of teachers, especially principals about the parents and students. This issue will be discussed later, but at this point it is appropriate to show how the professionals' perceptions about the parents who come from distance, regardless of where they come, reproduce the distinctions between them and those who do not have power to come by attributing values such as consciousness to their ability to access.

In both of the schools, the professionals' general evaluations on the parents in their school are based on the parents' distinctiveness from parents in other public schools. The parents' rejection of neighbourhood schools which demonstrate their demand for better quality education, so coming from distance itself constitutes a ground for school professionals to distinguish their schools through the parents. On the basis of the parents' efforts to send their children to these schools, professionals attribute values which distinguishes them from other parents such as consciousness. Accordingly, the parents who are satisfied with what the state provides in other public schools are attributed opposite characteristics and values.

In Keçiören and similar areas, parents do not have any expectations, they say, at least, my child should go to the school closer to the house. They do not want to pay for the school bus service. They do not want to add anything supplemental to education. They are satisfied with what the state gives. The issue of proximity is important for the lower income group (DP, School A)

Although there are parents in School A coming from Keçiören, they are distinguished just because they can come from there, as can be seen from the statements of the deputy principal. The dependence of this differentiation on economic capital is obvious, so the demand for better quality education and a certain level of consciousness associated with it, seems to be specific to families with a certain level of economic capital.

Similar evaluations that the deputy principal in School A made for Keçiören in general, are made by the principal in School B for certain neighbourhoods of Keçiören where significant number of their students come from. She makes a comparison between the social profile of the school and the general profile of these neighbourhoods based on her own experiences:

I worked as a teacher in Esertepe before, in these areas the profile is very different from here. A caring parent does not want to send her/his child in there inherently. There are many coming from the East, for example. They are generally children with family problems, there is a big disconnect between the family and the children, the family is not aware of the child... Although I was appointed there, although I was a teacher there, I bought a house from Subayevleri and sent my children to the school in Subayevleri. In Esertepe the teacher is just trying to keep the child in the classroom, you follow if he/she is using drugs... but it is different here (Principal, School B)

According to her, the parents who are coming this school avoiding their neighbourhood schools although they live in these neighbourhoods are the caring and conscious parents. These parents are conscious also because of not sending their children to the private schools according to her.

In private schools, you cannot see the child clearly, as private schools are focused on financial gain. In a public school, if the child is 70, it will not be 75. In private school, grades are usually between 90 and 100. Parents who have money but are unconscious, who don't want to take care of the child send their children to private schools. You have to take care of the child here (Principal, School B)

As discussed before, the studies on choice related social inequalities in education mostly refer to the values and meanings attributed to education and schools by the parents. They show that values, perceptions and priorities vary according to the social class position of the parents (Ball et al., 1996; Vincent, 2001). The perceptions of the professionals about the parents in these popular schools and values attributed to the parents by them without considering their ability or capacity to access demonstrate that values and meanings attributed to the parents by the professionals are also important in choice related social inequalities. In that sense, the professionals' perceptions about parents not only reproduce socio-spatial distinctions through where the parents come from as will be discussed later, but also through the parents' spatial mobility. The school professionals by attributing caring and consciousness to their rejection of neighbourhood schools value their seek for better quality education. In that sense, perceptions of the professionals not only justify the competitive action of the parents that create school hierarchy, but also drive their own practices as response to the parents' seek for exclusivity.

5.4.2. Demand for exclusivity

As the parents who cannot afford to send their children to the prestigious private schools, meeting their demands for exclusivity depends upon the professionals' response. As discussed before, choosing private school exiting from the public education system is the most guaranteed way for the middle classes who seek for exclusivity which mainly refer to the secure educational environment for their

children based on lack of social diversity (Ball, 2003). On the other hand, middle classes who stay in the public education system, provide exclusivity by excluding the lower classes (van Zanten, 2003). The strategies of the parents in both popular schools are also exclusionary towards the ones in subordinate position. However, exclusion is directly dependent on the parents' strategies driven by social concerns, as well as indirectly through the formation of the schools as exclusive places with academic concerns. It should be stated that academic concerns and social concerns are mostly intertwined, but it is important to point out that the schools as sub fields, the rules and regularities the schools as sub fields follow are also exclusionary and the professionals as the actors of educational supply are crucial in this formation, as discussed later. Now, how the parents' demand for better quality education manifests itself within the schools is focused.

One of the common attitudes among two groups of parents is not to be contented with the educational service provided by the state. They are not passive service recipients in that sense, but this attitude is stronger among the parents in School A. Sending their children to these schools instead of the school determined by the placement system is itself demonstrates that attitude, and their seek for exclusivity, but it also extends into the schools and manifests itself in their educational practices.

In School B, for example, the most conspicuous issue in this regard is supplementary books or resources. The teachers state that although it is prohibited by MoNE, parents always ask them for supplementary books. The opinion that the textbooks provided by the Ministry are insufficient is dominant among the parents.

Public schools are inadequate. In this school, they do not receive education from the books given by the state. They are empty. They make us buy supplementary books (P8, School B)

The fact that they can overcome this inadequacy with supplementary books depends on the capitals, especially the economic capital the parents possess. For example, a mother who comes from Yenimahalle and whose older daughter is attending the school in their neighbourhood states:

For example, while it is very easy to make parents buy a book here, it is very difficult to make parents to buy a book there. For example, we couldn't even buy a supplementary book for my daughter, teachers don't want it, parents don't want it either. They say "are they [students] using it, we are using it, there is no need for extra book (P4, School B)

Another parent shows that different educational practices depend on the capital of the parents, so are triggered by more powerful positions that the parents occupy, but these are possible with the school's response:

Something like a supply-demand issue, the more parents demand from the school, the more the school improves the quality of education. We are not content with only school books, we want supplementary books, for example. In other schools, parents do not want this to avoid costs (P2, School B)

How their positional difference from those who are in subordinate position in schooling field differentiates the school through the interventions of the parents on the educational processes in the school and what does it mean for the professionals is revealed by a teacher who compares the school with the school her husband works in Şentepe:

My husband is a teacher in Şentepe, for example, at a middle school. Here, the profile is really different in the sense that the parents here never leave the student unattended, they take care of their children in every sense; dershane, private lessons, private courses... You do not have any problems in providing supplementary books. But at the school where my husband works, they have to act more restrained since the financial situation in there is apparent. Students are not supported. Can we call the success of this school the success of the teacher? Children are supported in every way. There is the success of the private lessons, there is the intervention of the parents, there is the success of the dershane... Now, for example, when we ask how many students cannot buy supplementary books, there exists one or maximum two students in each class (T8, School B)

The parents' expectations of education unlike "standard public school education" can also be captured in their views on teachers, this also provides insight into how parents act in relation to teachers in the process of differentiation of the school from other schools.

Teachers shouldn't act with the logic of "let me give my lecture and go". She/he should be idealist teacher who tries a little harder, deals with what I can teach outside the curriculum (P14, School B)

Similar expectations and practices are seen among the parents in School A more strongly. Here, not only support the educational process of children with supplementary books, but also intervention to improve the educational conditions in the school is common among the parents. For example, a teacher tells how the parents changed the desks of a whole class with new desks:

For example, a parent said that the desk was very uncomfortable for his child, he said, please, let me buy a comfortable desk for my child. I said we will either buy for the whole class or not. Then they renounced, there was already 1 year to graduate. However, the parent said that my child came home with back pain every day. It created a big problem. Then they jointly changed the desks of the class (T7, School A)

Another example of the parents' intervention in the educational conditions in the school is the case that I witnessed in the parent-teacher meeting in School A. In the meeting, after the teacher talked about the uncleanness of the classroom and said "you should support us in cleaning", the parents emphasizing that the lighting in the classroom is very bad and the bags are too heavy, said, "let's all turn a hand to the classroom about lighting and cabinets". Especially the weight of the bags became a subject of a long discussion; some parents insisted that they should buy cabinet so that the children do not carry such heavy bags every day. Afterwards, the parents' suggestion to prevent children from carrying any books; tearing the page related with the daily homework and carrying only that page, became a challenge for the teacher. Against the suggestion of the parents who said "let's go to the principal, you are the class teacher, tell the principal, take responsibility" to tear off the books, the teacher who resisted by saying "I cannot say this to other teachers, I cannot say that they will tear your book" gave up at the end of a long discussion, and said "ok, I let them tear the books".

Capitals, especially the economic capital the families possess is crucial for these kinds of interventions and challenges. Similar socio-economic status of the parents in School A is important in the sense that it eases the parents' intervention to improve

the educational conditions in the school. For example, a mother after evaluating the families as similar in socio-economical terms, stated that it is easy to do something together with this family profile:

Just because of the sun, there are students who cannot focus on the lessons, when we say let's buy a curtain, no parent say no. These are important things. Nobody said no when we said let's make a coding class (P9, School A)

These distinctive practices in the schools should not be considered one-sided since their demands turn into distinctive practices that shape the schools as fields by being responded by the teachers and the principals. At this point, investigating the parents' demand for exclusivity through the teachers will be appropriate to show the parents' challenges and pressures in differentiating educational practices in the schools.

First of all, the teachers are aware that they work in a successful school with high demand. They talk about some difficulties to work in this kind of a school. For example, in School B, teachers most of whom worked in the neighbourhoods like Şentepe, Esertepe, Yükseltepe before, states that they have to work harder in here. For example, a teacher who have been working in the school for 20 years, gives an example from his friend, and reveals the ideas of the teachers working in these neighborhoods in the district about School B; *"I talked to teachers, my friend working there, he says I will ask my appointment, but I'm afraid, I cannot teach there [School B]"* (T1, School B).

This is also the case in School A, most of the teachers state that they are studying before the lessons and express that not everyone can survive in the school, also that there were many teachers who could not cope with the workload and went to other schools.

There is something here; the hard-working teacher can do here, but the teacher who wants to slack off cannot do here. For example, most of the teachers who come here don't go if they adapt, they retire from here. The teacher who does not adapt does not stay here long; she/he goes back after 2-3 years. For example, there are many teachers who come from Mamak and go back to Mamak, because she/he has to study here (Principal, School A)

In the schools the challenge the teachers face as they stated, comes from the parents. Although the conflictual relationship between parents and professionals is common in both schools, it is more apparent in School A depending on more powerful positions of the parents in the school. In this regard, it is possible to say that there are many more examples given by teachers about how parents create challenges for them.

I have to give and prove and explain the exam papers to the parents. They object to the exam grade, for example. For example, he says that there were no questions about hours, for example, based upon what the child tells him. He is accusing me, I have to prove, show, explain... (T2, School A)

Most of the teachers in School A including the principal and deputy principal complain about the attitudes of parents, their interference in their business.

For example, I saw a parent who listened to the lesson at the door, she listens and then goes and says that this teacher should not teach like that. I saw the parents who said let me make the curriculum. There are those who say I don't want this teacher (DP, School A)

As can be seen from the quotes it is common for parents to get involved in classroom management, exam grades, and even the curriculum in School A, and this is an important challenge besides studying for preparation before the lessons that the teachers have to deal with.

For example, I made a change of the place of a child. Mother came and said that the child does not want to sit with that friend, his motivation is broken, he is more upset because you said you can't change place. For this reason, she went to the principal to complain. For example, they even follow up the curriculum and say you should be on this subject this week. They even interfere with it (T12, School A)

Since the parents in both schools are structurally powerful positions depending on their cultural, economic also social capital, they can easily demand more from the schools, also can question and challenge the schools. In that sense, parent-teacher relations are conflictual.

I've been a teacher for more than 20 years. They interfere so much that I think they have no respect for teachers. Especially, we have too many parents working at ministries, they are really pushing, they are using their power (T12, School A)

The conflictual relationship between the teachers and the parents is more evident in school A, and as can be seen from the quotas above and below, this mostly due to their power stemming from occupational status.

Our parents are mostly the ones who are working in the ministries, so I don't have very good impressions about them. Because they work in the Ministries, they think they are superior and can intervene in everything. Parents do not rely upon our decisions. They interfere in every decision, even if we change the place of the child, they say "why did you place her/his here", for example. They are daring. By the way, their style is also very bad. They ask like that for example; "Do you think this decision is right? on the phone. Our parents can call whenever they want and say whatever they want (T11, School A)

The parents' powerful positions vis-à-vis that of teachers is important factor that shapes the internal dynamics of the school differentiating the educational practices. It should be said that in both schools, teachers are composed mainly of experienced teachers. Since the demand for the schools is high among the teachers as well, appointment to these schools requires higher scores that also means more experience. Most of the teachers had previously worked in neighborhoods with lower socio-economic status, and based on their past experiences, they can tell comparatively how the current social composition in their school is challenging for them. For example, a teacher who previously worked in Doğantepe, a *gecekondu* neighbourhood states:

In the previous school, the student's commitment to the teacher was very different. You are her/his everything there. Sometimes you are the parent, sometimes you are the doctor, but there is only a student-teacher relationship here. There was much more devotion to the teacher and the love of the teacher in Doğantepe (T7, School B)

The expressions of a teacher in School A, who previously worked in Mamak, Akdere and Abidinpaşa, at the schools mostly serve to their neighbourhood population,

strikingly reveal how the positional difference between parents and teachers makes difference in the educational practices in the schools:

There was almost no school bus in Mamak, there was no bus in Akdere too, there were 2 or 3 school buses in Abidinpaşa. They were all kids from the neighborhood. To be honest, I was enjoying my teaching there more. Because the parent has a special respect for the teacher, and so does the child and the things you teach the child are things that she/he really needs to learn, because there is a big difference between family profile and your position, but not so here. Here, most of the parents know a lot, and the students too. You don't have much to tell him/her about your field or give him/her extra about life... The parent knows everything better than us. Not in the sense of mathematics, but in the sense of education, in the sense of the psychology of the child, in the sense of classroom management... (T9, School A)

As demonstrated by him, the structurally powerful position of the parents is a significant factor that differentiates the educational practices in the schools. However, this should be considered in relation to the professionals. In other words, powerful positions of parents and their demands, practices triggered by their positions shape the internal dynamics of the schools with institutional response to these demands and practices. In this context, the complementary practices of teachers and school principals will be discussed in the following section.

5.4.3. Ensuring quality

As stated, it is not the parents and their exclusionary strategies that differentiate these schools from other public schools and create school hierarchies in the field, but the internal dynamics of the schools, based on the practices of both parents and school professionals, operating in a broader field of schooling that is also hierarchically structured in social and geographical sense. In other words, the differentiation is not only the result of the structural inequalities, but also a product of the practices of the agents in the schools who act within hierarchically structured schooling field. Thus, school differentiation is, to a certain extent, a product of an effort. Principals and teachers are the significant actors who actively produce this differentiation in response to the parents.

“Organizational actors distinguish themselves from others within their field by means of symbolically meaningful position-takings - e.g., works, services, acts, arguments, products...” (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008, p. 14). The parents’ seek for educational service unlike “standard public school education” is responded by the school professionals distinguishing themselves from other public schools, both discursively and in terms of educational service they provide.

Although it is stronger in school A, professionals in both schools compare their own schools with private schools, and this constitutes an important line of differentiation from other public schools, but how the comparison is made is different in two schools. In School B, there is a common understanding among the professionals that private schools are overrated and do not provide good education. The comparison is based on the fact that the education they offer is better than the education provided by the private schools, rather than the fact that they resemble private schools. For example, in the parent-teacher meeting, a classroom teacher states that “we know what subject they are in the curriculum, we know their level, we see private schools. Our school's level is better than private schools” (T5, School B).

In School A, on the other hand, the comparison is made through their resemblance to private schools. For example, the principal draws such a similarity when talking about coding education that is not given in public schools:

Now, for example, robotic coding education, which is not available in any public school, has started. We chose 10 teachers, they started. It is available in all private schools, but not in public schools, we have done it now (Principal, School A)

Thus, in School A, to provide education at private school level is an important reference point to distinguish themselves from other public schools. Another example to how school professionals distinguish themselves from other public schools in terms of educational service they provide can be given from pandemic period. Although the quality of education service provided during the pandemic period distinguishes both of the schools from other public schools, it is also important in terms of showing the differentiation between them.

In School A, the principal and many teachers point out how, unlike many schools, they provided uninterrupted and quality education and they did not face the problems that were experienced by many public schools during that period.

No lessons were interrupted. Programs were prepared according to every condition. Administration worked very well. Compensation was definitely made and the lessons were never wasted. We did the online course that many colleges cannot do (T9, School A)

The teacher's statement above is important not only in terms of showing the quality of the education they provided in the pandemic period, but also in terms of comparing their educational service with private schools. Similarly, from the interviews with the professionals in School B, it is understood that they did not face the problems that many public schools experienced during the pandemic period. However, as can be seen from the quote below, the comparison is made with other public schools in their region in Keçiören regarding the quality of educational service provided.

We were very good during the pandemic period. We had a hard time, because the curriculum had changed constantly, but our teachers attended the classes regularly and gave their lessons. When there was a technical problem in EBA, they immediately switched to Zoom. The ministry first restricted with EBA, but then gave permission to Zoom. Lessons were held in full and participation was high. Tablets and computers were given to some children. We also channel the ones who wanted to donate. Records of the lessons were brought every week, we got over that process very coordinated. We are better compared to the region (DP3, School B)

Although the smooth and uninterrupted provision of education during the pandemic period distinguishes these two schools from many other public schools, the strategies followed to provide education in this period differ in two schools, and it is understood that the principals' role in this difference is important besides the demands of the parents.

School B mostly acts within the framework of the Ministry's instructions, for example, the deputy principal's statements above demonstrate that only after the

permission of the Ministry, a different tool from EBA, the network developed and provided by the Ministry of National Education and used for online education by public schools during the pandemic period, had started to be used for the online lessons. The tool used for the lessons is a platform that has already determined as an alternative by the Ministry. On the other hand, implementations outside of the instructions are quite common in School A. Their method used for provision of education during the pandemic period is just one example to this. For example, in School A, a significant reason why they differ from other schools in the pandemic period with uninterrupted education is that they purchased a program, and run the classes on this program instead of EBA. It is understood that the role of the principal in the purchase of this program by taking initiative is significant. The principal in School A, by using legal gaps, takes the initiative in many implementations unlike the principal in School B, so he has found various ways to differentiate the provided education from the “standard public school education” as response to the parents’ demands. For example, he tells how he increases the success of the school by taking initiative, and circumventing the legal regulations. By transforming elective courses into must courses in practice, a more intensive program intended for the exam preparation is created and the number of teachers is increased accordingly.

How do we increase success? For example, I do not let them to choose elective courses. I'm setting a standard, I say just the name is elective, I say accept it or go away. For example, I choose reading skills starting from 6th, 7th and 8th grades, I choose “science applications”, I choose “mathematics applications”, I choose “Turkish history” for the exam preparation. The elective courses are the same with the other courses. For example, students are instructed 7 hours instead of 5 hours in mathematics; 6 hours instead of 4 hours in science. Inevitably, we start ahead. You have to take risk to do that

In addition to the taking advantage of the gaps in legal regulations, acting contrary to the regulations is also a way used by the principal to differentiate the provided education from the “standard public school education”. As in School B, one of the important indicators that show the parents’ demand for distinctive education is request for supplementary books, and the response to this demand by the principal is a good illustration to that:

It says in the circular that supplementary book is prohibited. I permit. Now, everything is free in private school, they have all kinds of opportunities... what is it, "it is a burden to the parents in public school". Parents are constantly putting pressure on us; what should we buy, read? The parents know that the books are insufficient... For example, supplementary books are not allowed in schools, but it is allowed in our school. They bring and put them out during the seminar period, I have 7 Turkish teachers, I do not interfere with my friends, I say examine which one is more useful, find out and recommend. We recommend when asked

His expressions also show that in his acting in violation of legal regulations, the demands of the parents and his perceptions are effective together. As can be seen from the quote above, according to him, it is unfair that private schools and public schools are not subject to the same regulation regarding supplementary books, while it is free to recommend and make parents to buy supplementary books in private schools, it is prohibited in public schools. In that sense, the role of his perception of justice is undeniable in his acting contrary to the regulations of the Ministry.

Another example of his practices contrary to what is prescribed by the central authorities can be given from the pandemic period. In this period, it was decided by the Ministry that the schools that were closed for a long time would be opened in a very short time and switch to face-to-face education instead of online education, and the one-day period given to schools to switch to face-to-face education became the subject of discussions as it put professionals and parents in a difficult situation. The principal in school A, while expresses how he took the initiative and did not comply with the Ministry's decision at that time, he reveals the issue that was discussed earlier in the context of de facto authority that the principals have in practice/implementation.

Maybe I'm a contrarian principal, I go my own way. Let me give you an example, we were closed, then suddenly they [the central authority] opened the schools. We were not prepared for that. I didn't open the school. It was announced at 11 pm. I said, my friends, we are not going to open school tomorrow, we will continue distance education. They said it would be sanctioned, I said it doesn't make sense. We had already divided the classes into two, we were doing hybrid education. You [the central authority] say that you opened them all at once. We do not have a curriculum; we did not do it because we did not expect such a thing. I said I do not open, I did not open. I sent a message [to the teachers], we continued in the same way. Then they

[the central authority] said that it [face to face education] will start after making the necessary preparations until Monday. They took steps backward. The man who took this decision cannot predict this, so does not know about the bottom (Principal, School A)

His expressions embody how the centralized structure of the educational system which brings about divergences between the policies designed by the central authorities and local realities in the schools, and the lack of comprehensiveness in educational policies which manifests itself as partial solutions to the problems make principals de facto authorities of implementation by forcing them to find their own ways of implementation, and demonstrate the principals' role of mediation between what is designed and real problems. His expressions for example, talking about his own personality traits or expressions he often uses like "I am a brave person", "I am experienced and I solve the problems myself", also demonstrate the significance of dispositions and perception for the operation of the schools.

When compared with School B, the practices contrary to the regulations are more common and apparent in School A, and it can be said that the principal is a more significant actor for the differentiation of the school as popular school. On this difference, the effect of the fact that he is more experienced than the principal in School B, and has been working at the school for a longer time cannot be ignored. He is principal in School A for eight years, since 2014 and has 35 years of professional experience, while the principal who has 19 years of professional experience has been working in School B as principal for four years, since 2018. However, this does not mean that the principal in School B is ineffective in the formation of the school as popular school. This will be examined in more detail in the next section especially regarding her role in the formation of the social composition of the school which shape the school as field as an exclusive place excluding some groups of parents. However, if we return to how school professionals distinguish themselves from other public schools through their practices in response to the parents' demands, another issue that can be discussed is the management style.

Management style is another line of differentiation from other public schools, and developed with the effect of parents. Being accessible and monitoring the students are commonly emphasized features in both schools, also open communication between the school principals and teachers, and with parents is underlined as a difference from the public schools adopting “classical teaching style”. For example, the deputy principal in School A again makes an analogy with private schools when she talks about their management style:

I can reach the family of anyone who enters through that door. This is something that is seen in private schools, not in public schools. The parent knows their child is safe... (DP, School A)

As stated by the deputy principal, the distinctive character of the school stems not only from educational quality but also from their management style. She underlines accessibility, monitoring, caring for children in that sense.

So, what really makes them come to this school is not to be very good at teaching, but to monitor the child very closely. The parent knows this. In other words, the capacity of a child can be low, but the parent says if he/she attends a school like School A, he/she learns something, takes advantage of the socio-cultural environment (DP, School A)

As she demonstrates being a desirable/popular school is not only dependent on the academic success of the school in objective sense but also the school’s operation of which the management style takes an important part. Management style and their teaching approach, similar to that of private schools, are used to distinguish themselves from other public school.

We know all the students. The parents have our phone numbers. We are accessible. The parent can reach us whenever he/she wants. He/she knows that if the child has a problem and is here, it is solved, he/she is safe here. The school principal's door is not closed. I think we provide trust. We are a school where children can be entrusted. We put academic success in the second place, safety and happiness comes first. We are in the information age now; the child can learn from Youtube. The teacher who says information only, is behind the age (DP, School A)

These arguments put forward by the deputy principal while revealing what differentiates the school from other schools, are also approved by the parents. For example, a parent underlines close monitoring of students:

School A do not let loose the children. The teachers are in dialogue. She/he can say I don't care, she/he has a chance, she/he doesn't have to follow my child. What does a teacher do? She/he comes to class, some of the children understand, some don't understand, but if she/he says that your child isn't understanding, this is different (P6, School A)

This reveals the difference not only of school administrators but also of teachers. The contribution of the teachers to the popularity/desirability of the school is also based on their experience. Just as being an old school is associated with being a well-established school in the eyes of the parents, being an older generation and experienced is associated with being a “good” teacher.

I am very satisfied with the teachers' approach, there are older generation, experienced teachers. It is a school that cannot be reached with the score of newly graduated teachers. It requires experience. They follow the children closely. Every teacher knows every student very well. I can easily reach the school whenever I want, at least to the administration (P5, School)

Similarly, the management style in School B is an important line of differentiation from other public schools who adopt “classical teaching style”. The deputy principal while revealing this, she also underlines the importance of experienced teachers in the smooth functioning of the school.

There is a functioning system here, but there are also schools in chaos. I can communicate with my principal, and teachers can express themselves. There are principals who adopt classical teaching style. There, teachers cannot share their ideas, communication is broken, the system is clogged. I think there is harmony here, it makes a difference. In general, having experienced teachers is an advantage. There is understanding and calmness in communication... We are also generally transparent with parents. Since our parents are often demanding, we are in constant communication. I talk easily with 15 parents a day (DP2, School B)

It is understood that the schools that she refers to for comparison when talking about the management style and general functioning in the school, so the “school in chaos”

or the schools who adopt “classical teaching style” are other public schools. In that sense, she compares the school to other public schools, unlike the comparison that is often made with private schools in School A. For example, she continues comparing the school with her previous school in İstanbul, also reveals the effect of parents on their different management style and general operation of the school:

The children here, for example, can come and talk about their problems individually whenever they want. They have such self-confidence, although sometimes it is too much and wrong. This means that it was allowed, it was not said to go out or something. To be honest, there was not that much understanding in İstanbul. This school is insightful, open to communication, problem solver. The parent doesn't allow us to pass over the problems anyway. You can't skip it, the parent doesn't leave anyway (DP2, School B)

The effect of the parents is related to their different social profile from other public school parents. For example, another deputy principal in School B demonstrates how the social positions of parents affect educational practices and management style in the school:

Here is where families with higher socio-economic level live. Houses are very expensive. Thus, parents are those who have money, they can be doctors, judges or those tradesmen. As the economic level rises, access to resources also increases. Therefore, the school has to be more disciplined, since we face with parents who follows more, teachers have to be more careful as well. Teachers also give more because she/he can get what he gives. This has advantages and disadvantages in terms of management; the parent wants to be involved in everything, she/he wants to direct, she/he wants to manipulate you, she/he is more demanding. The higher the economic level, the higher the self-confidence of the people, of course more consciousness as well. They think that their children are more valuable, and everybody should value them (DP3, School B)

As I have shown, the differentiation of these schools from other public schools based on the mutual practices of the parents in their search for exclusivity and the professionals in their ensuring educational quality as response to the demands for exclusivity. Now, I will discuss how these schools located in the different districts within the hierarchical schooling field are formed as socio-spatial closures, focusing on the exclusionary strategies of the parents and the principals' role in forming the social composition of the schools.

5.5. Socio-spatial closure: The rules and the game of access

This section focuses on the reciprocally adopted strategies of parents to access better quality education and of educational professionals to reproduce their symbolic capital and maintain their positions in the schooling hierarchy, and how these strategies form the schools as exclusive and exclusionary places. In that sense, the schools as fields are identified with socio-spatial closure generated by the actors of both supply and demand sides of education. As argued, bypassing the formal regulations on school placement by the parents and bending them by the school principals indicate that in practice, there are different patterns of access enabled by informal rules. The section dealing with the schools as sub-fields, aims to reveal these informal rules and the game of access that is determined by negotiations and struggles between the parents and school professionals.

The strategies and the practices of the agents that form the schools as fields is based on formation of the schools as socio-spatial closures in practice. As Bourdieu describes with “club effect”, entrance to these schools requires not only economic and cultural capital, but social capital as well, and so, they are exclusionary for those “who do not display all the desired properties or who present any one of a number of undesirable properties” (Bourdieu, 2018, p. 112). The reason why it is considered as socio-spatial closure is that it is embodied in certain place, school, and at the same time it is realized through the control over space.

As demonstrated by the studies in the related literature that address school choice as social process, the parents’ exclusionary strategies of school choice operate as the strategies of social closure, but unlike in the literature, this is not just based on the exclusionary strategies of parents towards each other; the school principals and the teachers are also the actors who create closures that form these schools as privileged places with the strategies they adopt. Moreover, rather than to be driven simply by class differences, the exclusionary strategies of the parents are driven by the positional differences in the schooling field that is determined by the intertwinement

of social positions and geographical positions. In that sense, this section focuses on the relational aspects of exclusion that cannot be explained in an isolation from distributional aspects.

The first part which focuses on the parents' exclusionary strategies of access to the schools that operate as the strategies of social closure, demonstrates how the positional difference of the two groups of parents make difference in their strategies, so how the "social and geographical structures exercise constraints on households' strategies" (Crow, 1989, p. 8). The second part which focuses on the strategies of professionals, especially the school principals, reveals their active role in the formation of social composition of the schools, so in the formation of the schools as socio-spatial closures. How their perceptions and judgements about the students and parents that drive their strategies of closure are spatial as well as social is also discussed. A more detailed discussion on the role of socio-spatial distinctions in the perceptions of the agents which drive their strategies and practices will be provided in the last section (5.6). By this way, the symbolic aspects of the negotiations and struggles that form the schools as fields are revealed.

5.5.1. Two strategies generating social closure

Investigation on the school decisions of parents, how they decided, and what were the motivations behind their decisions etc. approves that "school choice" is a social process. Similar to the findings of the researches on the middle classes' school choice, the parents' decisions on the schools have a highly symbolic character becoming a way of differentiate themselves from others.

The parents make reference to the social profile of the schools and the neighbourhoods where the schools are located by comparing them with the social composition of their own neighbourhoods. Their decisions on the school are influenced by the family profile in the school as well as by the social profile of the neighbourhoods they live. In conformity with what is revealed in the literature on the middle classes' school choices, the parents "seek for lack of social diversity" and "tolerable level of social mix in the learning environment of their children to realize their educational expectations and secure advantages for their children" (van Zanten,

2003) is noticed in their expressions. Thus, when they decide they consider not only the school and success of the school in objective sense, but also “social environment”, with whom their children will be. The dual character of what they seek; to be with “people like us” and to avoid “people not like us” is apparent among the parents. However, while the letter more strongly affects the decisions of the parents in School B, the former is more influential on the decisions of the parents in School A.

In School B, almost all the parents who come out of the jurisdictional area of the school refer to the mixed, heterogeneous social structure, Syrians, Ethiopians, strangers, unknown people etc. in their neighbourhoods: “There isn't a very good school in our area. I don't like our neighbourhood very much. It became crowded, where people come from is unknown” (P1, School B) It is understood that the school and the surrounding neighbourhood is decided against the heterogeneous social composition of their own neighbourhood composed of *the undesirables*.

In fact, there is no longer different from here, markets and shops have opened... In that respect, there is not different from here in appearance, but with the demolition of Çinçin, a lot of people came to Esertepe from there, a very mixed population structure emerged (P5, School B)

In that sense, their decisions are mostly driven by the seek for avoiding “people not like us”. The expressions of a mother who had moved from İncirli to a house around the school is very illustrative in that sense:

Researcher: Why is it so common to send the children to the distant schools?
The impact of living in the big city is huge. This is a place [Keçiören] that receives immigration, and because of the impact of it, because different people live together. You asked, why did you come here from İncirli? Because, there was not suitable for me. Maybe this is not the case if you go to a district, it is not so if you go to Beypazarı, nobody moves for school (P2, School B)

These parents are living in certain neighbourhoods of Keçiören and Yenimahalle where used to be gecekondu areas. They continue to live in these neighbourhoods mostly because of the low rents or housing prices, but do not want their children to attend the schools in that neighbourhoods not only because of the low-quality

education, but also because of the social profile of parents which has a strong reference to the mixed social composition of neighbourhoods. For example, a mother from Şentepe who explained the reason of not sending her child to the neighbourhood school with high number of Syrian students, and prevalence of swearing among the children there, states that “*the teaching staff is good there but the socio-economic level is very low*” (P10, School B). She also explains why she does not move here by stating that “*I don't go out anyway, only my house is there, all my friends are here*” Thus, their decision on the school seems to be a part of identity formation against the social profile of their neighbourhoods. We can say that they make a distinction between students out there and themselves or more precisely, they send their children to the school out of those areas in order to be distinct or not to be like them.

I do not distinguish between people, but there are Kurds, there are people coming from Syria, paper collectors. I witnessed their theft. Here is better, safer in terms of culture... (P11, School B)

As a father of a 6th grade student explains why they moved to a house in the jurisdictional area of the school to send the child to this school; “in order that he doesn't become a crafty person” (*çakal çukal olmasın diye*) (P6, School B) As he stated, after a year in the school in Esertepe, behaviors of the child had resembled the other children, he had started to swear, for example.

In School B, it is not possible to separate parents' perceptions of school profile from their perceptions of the neighbourhoods they come from. Their concerns to avoid “people not like us”, so “the undesirable”, targets particular groups with a specific geographical correspondence. The distinction they make refers cultural differences that is strongly related with socio-spatial segregation patterns.

The vicinity of that school is gecekondü area. There are many refugees, that's why we chose this school.

Researcher: So why did not you move?

We are living in a gated community; we have no connection with those there. We decided on this school because there are families who are above the

standards, conscious families who are conscious about the future of their children, educated families, the families who can adapt themselves to the environment in the school even if they are not educated... The families living in the vicinity are educated, there is more neighborhood culture on that side, it is the gecekondulu culture... Those who have apartments are those who were gecekondulu before, they keep that culture alive (P13, School B)

As can be seen from the quote above, culture have a strong connotation with lifestyle which, according to Bourdieu, is “symbolic retranslation of positions in distributional sense” (Bourdieu, 2013, p. 297). “Lifestyle is fundamental symbolic manifestation of the positional differences through the constructed representations and classifications produced by the agents and function according to the logic of membership and exclusion” (Bourdieu, 2013, p. 299). In that sense, parents’ classifications and judgements of “others” that are strongly related with socio-spatial segregation patterns especially across the district are significant part of strategies of social closure and this shows that struggles that shape the school as field are also symbolic struggles.

Despite not being so frequent and strong, cultural difference between the school profile and the social profile of the neighbourhoods they come is also referred by the parents in School A. For example, a mother’s judgements and representations of her own neighbourhood and the social profile in the neighbourhood school that her daughter attended in primary school in Yaprak similarly refer to the cultural difference she made between “the others” and themselves:

Researcher: You are satisfied with your neighbourhood but you are not satisfied with the educational service there, did I understand right?

Our teachers are very good, the conditions of the school are very good, they are successful, but the number of children whose mothers are housewives is too high. The cultural environment that reflects on children in relation to what they do in their spare time is different. They are the children of culturally closed families. There are families with high socio-economic status, but it is a place where the number of tenants is too high; there are all kinds of families. There are many civil servant families, but only one of the spouses works. Accordingly, the opportunity offered to children differs. We had that problem in 4th grade. Our achievement level in class was very good, they were successful, but when it was said that let's go to the museum? For example, they said there is no money. When we said let's go somewhere, socialize the children, they said you asked for a lot of money. They had

difficulty in finding 5 Liras. There was no such habit. These families were closed at home. These mothers have one or two other children at home. I do not find them strange, but she does not want to create that opportunity for her child. But I see that 40 students were devoid of many social activities because of these families (P9, School A)

Her expressions demonstrate that what they seek is not only the academic success but also a cultural environment that they find close to them and which requires a certain homogeneity in the social composition of the school. Similar to the expressions of the parents in School B, cultural difference in her expressions connotes with different lifestyle which is a symbolic expression of positional difference and function to make distinction from “the others” with the logic of exclusion. However, in School A, rather than certain identified groups overlapping with a particular geographical location, the others or “the undesirable” refers to more general groups such as Syrians or the parents who are in less powerful positions, despite not being said explicitly. The emphasis on the other hand, is more on the social composition in the school and the neighbourhood the school is located, so the consideration on “people like us” or “the desirable” is stronger when compared with School B.

Children from Keçiören already come here, but the profile of people living here is very different, there are no Syrians, for example. Of course, this is important for school choice. Here is secure; there is no outside interference, there is nothing around the school, the people you can see are people like us (P5, School A)

The salient point in the expressions of the parents about their school decisions in the interviews is that unlike the parents in School B who emphasize the mixed social composition of the neighbourhoods they live and the neighbourhood schools, the emphasis on the social composition in School A and the surrounding area is stronger among the parents in School A.

Access to drugs, strangers... I think here is far from them. The school is in a very central location. It is a location where such things do not happen. A location where there are institutional workplaces, not everyone can easily enter (P7, School A)

In that sense, while the focus of their decisions is the current school, School A, the focus of the decisions of the parents in School B is the schools in their neighborhoods. The difference in their considerations that determine their school decisions reveal the difference in their motivations behind the exclusionary strategies to access better quality education; while for the parents in School A, it is choosing the best option; it is escaping from the bad option for the parents in School B. The difference in the decision processes of two groups of parent supports this; the decisions of the parents in School B heavily rely upon what they hear from their circle of friends or relatives, while in addition to their social circles, there is an investigation process behind the decisions of the parents in School A. For example, a parent in School A states how she decided on the school as follows:

They said the school's [School A] education was very good; they praised the school a lot. I investigated and saw that everyone agrees. I have friends who are educators, I asked all of them, and this school came to the fore (P7, School A)

Another parent who lives in Mustafa Kemal Neighbourhood, states that they evaluated and investigated other schools although they live in the enrolment area of the school and already knew that the school is “good”:

Researcher: Did you ever think of other schools? Were there any other options?

Definitely there were. We knew the school was good actually, but we looked at other schools anyway. We knew it was a crowded school, so we evaluated other schools, as well (P8, School A)

At this point, with reference to the discussion on how middle-classes choose school in the related literature, it should be stated that the difference in two groups of parents' decision processes, motivations, how they decide does not mean that while the strategies of the parents in School A are the products of rational calculations, they are resulted from unconscious cultural processes of the parents in School B. Rather, what the difference in their drivers of strategies demonstrates is that the strategies of the parents are structurally conditioned contrary to what is assumed by the rational action theory.

First of all, as demonstrated above, the parents' perceptions and evaluations, the divisions they make between the "others" and themselves which are the embodiment of the structural divisions are significant in their school decisions and strategies. This brings us to the concept of habitus which is "the socially constituted principle of perception and appreciation" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 20) and used by Bourdieu to transcend the duality of subject and object or individual and the social, so action as intentional choice results from conscious calculation and action as mechanical response. Similarly, I use the concept of habitus with a purpose to consider the socially bounded character of the parents' strategies, while at the same time not missing out that they have a certain creativity. Thus, rather than being on the rationality or irrationality of their strategies, the focus here is on how their actions and strategies are conditioned by their structural positions in the field of schooling, also driven by their perceptions and evaluations about others which are also produced on the basis of the structural divisions.

Indeed, although it is not based on calculation and a conscious search for profit maximization, Bourdieu's concept of strategy does not completely exclude conscious action and calculation as a possible modality of action (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 131):

The lines of action suggested by habitus may very well be accompanied by strategic calculation of costs and benefits, which tends to carry out at a conscious level the operations that habitus carries out in its own way

The reason of Bourdieu's refusal of the rational action theory's understanding of action is its narrow understanding that disregards the social and economic conditions that constrain or enable action (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 124):

All the capacities and dispositions it [Rational Action Theory] liberally grants to its abstract "actor"-the art of estimating and taking chances, the ability to anticipate through a kind of practical induction, the capacity to bet on the possible against the probable for a measured risk, the propensity to invest, access to economic information, etc.- can only be acquired under definite social and economic conditions

By supporting this, the difference in two groups of parents' exclusionary closure strategies can only be explained by considering their positional differences, including geographical positions of the parents and the schools in the schooling field, so it can be understood in relation to the distributional aspects of exclusion. In other words, the difference in their motivation that determines their exclusionary strategies of access to better quality education is triggered by their positional difference in the schooling field that is hierarchically structured in geographical sense according to the uneven distribution of educational services and the agents.

As stated before, dependent on the province-wide educational inequalities stemming from the uneven geographical distribution of educational investments, Keçiören and Çankaya offers two very different examples; Keçiören is where there are limited public educational services, Çankaya is a district that is rich in public educational services. Therefore, while Çankaya offers more public school options, in Keçiören, parents choose from a limited number of public schools. Moreover, these two districts are different examples in terms of demand side differences, the geographical distribution of social composition, as well.

The parents in School B who are located in Keçiören are in a more subordinated position related with not only types and volume of capital they possess but also where they live regarding the schooling provision that is accessible. Not only the social, economic and cultural capital they possess, but also where they live (position capital), also the space they engage through daily mobility (situation capital) determine their ability of managing the distance that is more limited compared to the parents in School A. In School B, the parents' mostly living and working in Keçiören and the fact that their social network is mostly limited geographically to the district, structurally constrain their ability of managing greater distance, access to the schools in Çankaya. For example, the answer given by a parent who thinks that the schools in Çankaya are more successful, to the question of why she does not send her child to a school in Çankaya, reveals this constrain: "Distance creates a barrier to acquiring knowledge. It is difficult to have information about the schools there [Çankaya] because it is far away" (P2, School B).

What enables parents in School A who also live in Keçiören or similarly distant districts, to manage the physical distance is not only their more powerful social positions depending on their volume of economic, social and cultural capital, but also the situation capital, the greater distance they engage through daily mobility. Since they mainly work in the ministries around the school, in Çankaya, they engage with a larger space that also facilitates their access to the information of schools in Çankaya through their social networks.

Thus, the parents' geographical positions, where they live regarding the schooling provision and the space they can engage through mobilities and social networks effect their schooling decisions and strategies. The comparison between the schooling decisions of the two groups of parents has shown that not only social and economic conditions but also geographical context condition the actions and strategies of the parents. As Crow suggests, peculiarities of localities should be considered when analyzing the strategies of the agents (1989, p. 8):

Calculation cannot be engaged in and choices cannot be made without knowledge of the opportunities available, and so household strategies have to be seen in the context of local social networks which are the source of such information. Since there are many such ways in which social and geographical structures exercise constraints on households' strategies, it is vital to bear in mind the peculiarities of the localities in which they take place when analyzing strategies

In this sense, the more powerful geographical and social positions of the parents in School A enables them to make decisions on schools that is closer to “parental choice” as discussed in the related literature, to the extent that their decision is based on evaluating and eliminating more options at the end of an investigation process, so the motivation behind their decisions can be expressed as choosing the best option. On the other hand, the decisions on the school for the parents in School B are made in a more constrained structure with limited options and are mainly oriented by the escape from the “bad” option in the neighbourhood.

The distributional aspects of exclusion based on these positional differences which have a strong geographical basis, determines the distinctions embedded in the relational aspects of exclusion, whom the strategies of the agents exclude. This is also highly dependent upon geography they engage in the schooling field. “The undesirables” excluded by the parents' strategies for access to better quality education in School B are socio-spatially more targeted groups who live in certain neighbourhoods in Keçiören. Since the main motivation in their school decisions is to escape from the “bad” option in their neighbourhood that has strong social considerations, the social groups in their neighbourhoods they escape are the targets of their exclusionary strategies.

On the other hand, “the undesirables” targeted by the strategies of the parents in School A corresponds with a wider geography. However, it should be stated that social considerations in their decisions are not as strong as that of the parents in School B. As stated, their strategies are more school oriented and considerations on the social composition of the school is stronger. In that sense, rather than the parents the school principal and the professionals in School A are more crucial actors in the formation of the school as socio-spatial closure, excluding “the undesirables”. The next section intends to discuss the principals’ role in formation of the schools as exclusive places.

5.5.2. School principals as “gatekeepers”

In the transformation of the schools into privileged and exclusive places, the principals' strategies and practices are as exclusionary as those of the parents. In fact, contrary to what is intended by the regulations on the school placement, they are the authorities in practice that decide who is accepted or not. For example, contrary to the e-registration system that envisages automatic registration during which parents and school principals do not meet, registrations to these schools requires parents to meet with the principals and get their approval before the registration. As might be expected, this is a kind of requirement for the parents coming from outside the enrolment area of the schools through address change etc. For example, a parent who comes from Batıkent by declaring fake address states:

We had a preliminary meeting with the principal, he said ok. He said that there is no problem for me, he said that I will not report, I will make the registration. The mukhtar also said, he met with us, he said it is okay, there is no problem for me (P6, School A)

üHowever, meeting with the principal and getting her/his approval for the registration is also seen among the parents who have the right to register through workplace address because of the high demand especially in School A, as stated before. Thus, it can be argued that the principals are the key figures controlling the entrance to the schools in practice. Since the demand for the schools is so high, who is accepted and who is not is subject to selection and elimination, and as the de facto authorities to decide who will be accepted or not outside their jurisdictional areas, the principals are the key actors in the formation of these schools as socio-spatial closures. Before the examination of their role in this formation, it should be noted that for these schools, the selection begins much before the registrations. In other public schools in subordinated position, successful students whose parents also have relatively more economic resources, are directed to these popular schools by the teachers. For example, a parent whose daughter attended a school in their neighbourhood in primary education states:

My daughter attended to primary school in Ayvali, I was not very satisfied. Our teacher was very good, she/he said that if possible, do not send your child to the schools in this area. She/he said that you have the opportunity economically, send her to another school (P3, School B)

Similarly, a teacher in School B also explains the role of the teachers in transition of these students from the schools in subordinated position to the popular schools as follows: “*For example, when the teachers there [other neighbourhoods in the district] see a good student, they say go to School B, otherwise you will be wasted here*” (T1, School B).

The hierarchical structure of the field of schooling generates a kind of hidden selection mechanism activated by the professionals for these popular schools. As can be seen from the quotes above, the transitions mostly take place within the district,

Keçiören, for School B, but it is understood that selection is spread over a wider geography for School A. The principal's expressions on the school's success and the social homogeneity in the schools demonstrate this:

There is a certain level of homogeneity in the school, because it is a school where parents with high socio-economic and cultural status send their children, because students come to this school by selection. For example, if a student is successful in the classroom for example, in Mamak, Yenimahalle, Sincan, the teacher says, enroll your child to School A by hook or by crook. Then the parent is looking for how to register her/his child. Since the students come here by such a selection, there is a homogeneity (Principal, School A)

Beyond this hidden selection mechanism within the field of schooling, a selection and elimination mechanism operate through the principals within these schools as sub-fields. School principals have a crucial role in the sense that they determine their school capacity and boundaries of enrolment area, more importantly they are de facto authority to decide who will be accepted or not outside their enrolment areas as stated.

First of all, it should be noted that families' strategies to bypass the regulations, i.e., false address declarations are known, but mostly ignored by the school principals and deputy principals. Principals are officially allowed to accept applications if they have place after the enrolment of students living in their jurisdictional areas, also they can exceed the capacity as in the case in both schools. Since the demand for the schools is high, enrolment to these schools is more than a technical issue; parents are subject to the principals' evaluations and approvals. Thus, bypassing the regulations by false address declaration etc. is not enough for access to these schools, but school principals form another barrier to overcome for the parents. In their decisions on who will be accepted or not the principals' and deputy principals' perceptions and judgements as the drivers of their strategies to reproduce the school's position are crucial.

As discussed before, school principals as the implementers of educational policies have autonomy in practice that is rooted in their key role of mediation between centrally designed policies and daily operation of the schools which express different

realities in the education system in Turkey. Centralized structure of the education system and the lack of comprehensiveness in education policies makes their dispositions and perceptions crucial in the daily operation of the schools. As argued, this is not only related with their increasing responsibility in fund raising for the school budget in the context of school-based management. However, school budget is an important issue orienting the principals' strategies to maintain their positions in the field of schooling.

The budget is not necessary simply for the functioning of these schools, but provides the material basis to maintain their distinctive positions. In this respect, the capitals, especially the economic and social capital that the parents possess is also important for the differentiation of schools through the budget. For example, School A employs extra staff for cleaning and security, and the salaries of 4 out of 6 personnel are paid from the school budget. Security cameras, the program purchased in the pandemic period, security staff, etc. that are not often seen in other public schools are the services covered by the school budget.

Parents support us financially, for example, we built the garden. We do not have much financial difficulties. Not every school can easily employ 6 staff. We tell the parents at the meetings; if you give money, we create a good environment for you. We say that if you do not give, there is nothing we can do. Right now, we have a music class project, we will have it done. There is no gym, we were going to have it done, but the governorship did not allow (Principal, School A).

As stated before, the compulsory education in public schools is free and parents do not have to donate or pay dues to the schools, but in practice, donations and dues collected from parents directly or indirectly via school parent associations have a significant place in budgets of the public schools due to the inadequacy of resources transferred by the state.

Moreover, since the parents are not obliged to make financial contribution to the schools, collecting money or in more general sense, to make parents to contribute to the schools is dependent on the personal skills of the principals such as their “networking ability” and “interpersonal influence” (Altunay, 2019), as stated

before. For example, the principal's expressions below demonstrate how the responsibility to funding the schools is transferred to the schools by the state. They also show how to raise funds is left entirely to the skills of the principals by the state:

For example, I'm changing the cameras right now, they haven't been changed for 15 years. For example, MoNE says change the cameras, but don't ask me for money. They say create a resource. It's not a matter of whether I can get donations from parent, they only say that parents do not complain to us (Principal, School A)

For these popular schools, on the other hand, collecting donations or making parents to contribute to the school budgets is easier, regarding not only the parents' socio-economic conditions, but also just being distinguished schools. Being popular school legitimizes collecting donations from parents for such services as demonstrated by the principal:

I employ 6 people. The parents' union gives the salaries of 6 employees, and its money comes from the parents. They will receive donations from the parents so that we can employ staff. This time, the ministry says do not take money from the parents, but it does not provide staff. In order to solve this situation, most of the schools, the quality schools, good schools, receive money from parents. Most of the parents come from outside in these schools, the school wants to make use of this. In X School, for example, 5.000 liras received from each parent last year. For example, they have 1 million in their budget right now. But when I ask for it, the parent doesn't give. This year I will do the same. I will send all the students who come based on address to the police so that the addresses are investigated (Principal, School A).

The expressions of the principal above demonstrate that popularity and donation feed each other; while donation contributes to the popularity of the school through differentiation of services, at the same time, the popularity of the school facilitates collecting donation. Since a significant number of parents come to the school from outside the jurisdictional area bypassing the regulations, it becomes easier to collect donation which is not allowed by the formal regulations, from the parents.

The expressions of the principal above also hint at how donation is a means to be used in the negotiations with parents on registration/acceptance to the school, and

accordingly, how donation turns into a mechanism to exclude “the undesirable”. Thus, donation contribute to the popularity of school not only through making distinguished services possible, but also through its role in formation of social composition of the school. In this regard, the relationship between school budget and social composition is established in reverse for these popular schools; instead of social composition determining the school budget, the school budget determines the social composition through donation.

Another means to form the social composition of the schools that can be found in the principal’s expressions above, is reporting the addresses to the police, and it constitutes a more direct mechanism in this regard. If a parent can technically enroll her/his child in the school, by declaring a false address etc., the only legal way to prevent it is to report it to the police. However, this method is not used for everyone, or it is used selectively to prevent “the undesirable”. Besides this direct elimination/selection mechanism, donation is used more indirectly to form the social composition that the school serves.

The principal in School B states that the ministry provides financial support only for the bills, the sole financial resource for other expenses is the canteen rent but this is just enough to afford cleaning materials. In response to this, she underlines that they collect donations on a voluntary basis, despite the ministry's statement that donations will not be accepted. However, it is understood that the parents do not only provide monetary support for the school, but they contribute to the school through their professions. Therefore, the professions of parents, where they work becomes important.

Parents who come to us do not cause much problems in terms of financial support, you know, not in the form of money, for example, I had lamps that broke down, they had them repaired. For example, we have many children of advisors, there are many children from metropolitan municipality, there are children of deputies, so they support whatever needs to be done. Parents support the children who come from outside with poor financial condition. For example, during the pandemic period, there were few tablets from the ministry, other parents bought tablets for 20 maybe more students. We did not even have a student who could not attend online classes. First of all, the

class teachers let me know that this student has a problem, then I call some parents that I can ask. Thankfully, they bring and deliver it themselves (Principal, School B)

As can be seen from her expressions above, not only economic capital but also social capital that the school possesses through the parents is crucial for the budget, and it is apparent that the conversion of social capital to economic capital depends on the interpersonal influence and networking ability of the principal.

Although she does not state explicitly, it would not be unreasonable to expect parents in more powerful positions to be more acceptable for the school. This is more easily understood from her expressions on how they use the mechanism to report addresses to the police and how they eliminate the parents. Although she states that if the parent has changed the address there is not much to do, and first come first served, she also says that they are trying to persuade the parents not to come.

We are pushing parents to send their children to another school. For example, we tell the parents about the advantages of being in their own neighbourhood, you know, by deterrence... They have changed the address but they will come from there. I said, look, you will carry this child every morning and evening for 4 years, it is a torture, the child is also tortured because you will take her/him away from her/his friends in her/his own neighbourhood, in this case, the child's friends will be limited to the school, there will be no such thing as neighborhood culture or neighborhood friends.

Researcher: Isn't that exactly why they want this school?

Sure, there are many parents to come due to that reason. For example, she/he says I don't want my child to study with them. Okay, but if you are living there, the child inevitably takes the culture of the neighbourhood and when she/he comes to us, it reflects that culture anyway (Principal, School B)

As stated by her, they have to persuade the parents not to come or they report them to the police. As stated by her, they rarely use the mechanism to report addresses to the police, they use it against “problem families”:

If they have changed the address, there is no way except to persuade the parents, or you will report to the police. For example, when they come, before registering you contact the police, but we do it against problem families. For example, if the family is very problematic, because you know

some of them, because I worked in that neighbourhoods. Families are problematic, they cause trouble when they come, I know most of them (Principal, School B)

As can be seen from the expressions of the principal, she has the power not to accept the parent who can register to the school, although she says they have nothing to do if the registration is technically possible, and who will be accepted depends on her perception based on her past experience. Moreover, not only in the decision on who will be excluded but also who will be included, the perceptions of the principal are crucial. Expressions of a teacher who was a deputy principal before in the school demonstrate that:

When I was deputy principal, if the parent who come from outside was a quality parent, we definitely made registration, because she/he contributed to the school. The contribution is that the child is successful. It has nothing to do with wealth, it is cultural (T1, School B)

Thus, who gets persuaded or reported to the police so who is problematic, or who is registered immediately, so “the desirable” and “the undesirable” depends on the perceptions of the professionals, especially the principal. In School B, what determines the division between the undesirables and the desirables is mainly cultural difference. The principal makes classifications on the children and the parents’ accents, behavior, language etc. that correspond with the embodied form of cultural capital in Bourdieusian sense, and her perceptions based on cultural distinctions have strong spatial references. In that sense, the cultural distinction in the school corresponds with division between those who come outside the jurisdictional area of the school and those who live in the vicinity of the school.

Researcher: Is there any difference between those come from outside the jurisdictional area and those who comes from the neighbourhood?

There are many differences, primarily in terms of behavior. There is a huge difference between the two regions. For example, disciplinary problems usually occur among the students from Esertepe, Yüksektepe, Şentepe. We don’t have much problems with the students of this neighbourhood. Most of the students from other neighborhoods are the children of troubled families who have already migrated (Principal, School B)

Similarly, the principal of School A is the key authority who decides on who will be accepted or not, and his perceptions and judgements in relation to the strategies to maintain the school's position is crucial in that decisions. Moreover, the interviews with the principal reveal how the donation and reporting the addresses to the police are used as mechanism to form the social composition of the school as stated. For example, the principal who have been in this position since 2014 refers to the differences between his and the previous principal's period stating that before him, enrolment was more selective because every parent was obliged to pay a certain amount of money in the name of donation: "*He wanted 5.000 Liras, 10.000 Liras, then more distinguished students came, but now we receive the working parent. I don't know if she/he has money or not*". According to him, in those times the parent profile was more homogenous in socio-economical terms, but now he stated, there are parents from different social backgrounds, although he accepted that the socio-economic status of parents is high in general. It is possible to see the difference of present administration with their attempt to maintain the previous position of the school from his expressions below:

It is a privilege to work and study at School A. It is a brand. We still maintain that brand. While maintain, I opened the school to every segment. It wasn't before, it was going with money. We don't have such a thing now. But I think now, 5-6 years later, I did wrong (Principal, School A)

The reason of his thinking that he did wrong is the change in the socially homogeneous composition of the school:

They come for example, working parent, she/he cries, says there is no one to look after at home, we feel sorry... We admitted, we admitted, what happened? They came from Sincan, they came from Keçiören, they came from Yenimahalle, they came from Mamak... Some of them declared a fake address, some give money to the real estate agent. When crowded like this, not all students are at the same level (Principal, School A)

Against this, he declares that he will be more selective and stricter about donations. He legitimates this arguing that "*This school has a price, it has to be a price to study in this school*" and states that parents already give money to the real estate agents and janitors to change their address, this is the money to be given to the school:

She/he gives the money which should be given to me to the real estate agent or to the janitor, 3 students are seen in each janitor's house here. They give 2.000 Liras to the janitor; it has now turned into a rant. They give the donation which should be given to my school to the real estate agents or to the janitors. We are the victims here financially, but those who are outside the education spend the money. That's why I want to change my policy this year. I will send the address list to the police, 30 children will come to me. She/he registers by saying I live here, but I can't register the working parent. If my quota is below 30, I have the authority to register whom I want. Then I will say, brother, do you want to register here? Then, give the money that you will give to the real estate agent or janitor to the parents' union. I will say donate and come. At least, it serves to a purpose, contributes to education (Principal, School A)

Almost one and a half year after his declaration that he would be more selective about whom to accept by using donation and police mechanism more strictly, it seems that he realized what he declared. In the interview on October, 2021, he states that they have been trying not to exceed 30 students in each class for the last two years and to do that they report the addresses to the police and ask for donation. For example, when I ask him “There are many parents who want to register, how do you eliminate them?”, he gives the following answer:

We report to the police, also we want donation. We have to pay the salaries of 4 of the 6 staff here. Therefore, we request donations from the working parents in the registration period. We cannot accept every working parent because if we do, the number of students in each class will be 40-50 (Principal, School A)

Since the demand is very high for the school, these elimination mechanisms are used selectively. Reporting the address to the police for example, is not used for those who are in powerful positions. For instance, after he said they received too many calls from bureaucrats for registration, I asked him if he says “I do not accept, I am reporting the addresses to the police” when a bureaucrat calls, and he answered as follows:

Now we need to put ourselves in her/his place, we need to empathize. Now, there are more than thirty department manager and deputy manager in Provincial Directorate of National Education. Imagine, a citizen goes there and says I will enroll my child to School A, and then the manger calls me; my

principal, how are you, are you okay? We have a working parent, can you help?... It's a bit of a problem for me to tell him no, but of course I ask for donation (Principal, School A)

As grasped in his expressions above, donation seems to be more commonly used mechanism, since most of the parents come from afar, but it is used to eliminate the parents as stated before: “I look at the list in June, I look where did the child graduate from? Sincan. I say what are you doing here? I say go, donate to the parents’ union” (Principal, School A)

As in the School B, who is eliminated depends on the perceptions of the professionals, especially the principal in School A. The parents who are in powerful positions are more acceptable, however, the principal’s perception about the parents and students have strong spatial references that determine the desirability for the school.

Researcher: Is there any difference between those come from outside the jurisdictional area and those who comes from the neighbourhood?

There are differences by district. A student from Sincan is problematic, a student from Keçiören is problematic, for example, if she/he comes from Mamak, IKEA... it depends on the region. It also varies by parent. Now we don't have a chance to choose parents, they come from public institutions, for example, a cleaning worker comes too, we can't choose it. I don't do that either, so we register, but it makes a difference between the districts. A student coming from Dikmen, Çukurambar, and a student coming from Sincan, Mamak, Keçiören makes a difference. There occurs adaptation problem, we have problem of swearing, the neighborhood culture is reflected here as well. There are not many people who speak abusive words in Çukurambar or Dikmen, but it is more common in Mamak, Sincan etc. There are also complaints, we try to tolerate (Principal, School A)

As can be seen from the quotes above, the division is made in School A between those who come from affluent areas of the city and those who come from the deprived areas, and in the classifications and judgements of the principal, cultural differences in embodied form are intertwined with socio-spatial differences across the city. The divisions between those who come from affluent areas of the city and

those who come from the deprived areas in School A, and between those who live around the school and the ones who come from outside the enrolment area in School B form the dynamics of exclusion in the schools.

Although both of the schools' formation as popular public schools express creation of school hierarchy, their different geographical positions in the hierarchical structure of the schooling field effect how this creation is realized within the two schools. Higher demand for School A reinforces (informal) school selectivity and makes the school principal key actor in the formation of the school as socio-spatial closure. Exclusivity based on the exclusion of the "undesirables" mainly provided by the actors of educational supply, especially by the principal. Since the parents' demand for exclusivity is met by the principal through elimination and selection mechanisms, their strategies of social closure rather than targeting certain social groups directly, target at the school which already provides them a social homogeneity.

In School B which has relatively less demand limited with the parents in the district, informal selectivity of the school is relatively low. In line with that, the social composition is more heterogenous in the school. Since the selectivity of the school is low, there is a constant struggle within the school between the outsiders and insiders. In the elimination of the outsiders on the other, the parents' strategies based on the exclusion of social groups corresponding to particular neighborhoods are directly influential. Therefore, although the exclusion by selection role of the principal is relatively weak, parents have more direct effect on this role. The following section will focus on the schools separately to reveal the different dynamics that form the schools as socio-spatial closures, and especially how this is realized through the mediation of spatial divisions.

5.6. Two forms of closure

The previous sections have shown that the practices and the strategies of the agents shape these schools as socio-spatial closures based on the exclusion of the ones who do not display desired properties or display undesired properties. The school

principals are the key actors regarding their power to decide who is accepted and who is not, so to form the social composition of their schools, and they constitute another barrier for the parents to access to the schools. However, the principals' role in the exclusion by selection or elimination depends on the parents' motivations in their exclusionary strategies to access, which are conditioned by their social and geographical positions in the field. This is how the exclusionary dynamics within two schools differ.

First of all, exclusion towards the undesirable is seen not only in the struggle for access/entrance to the schools, but also in the struggle for survival in the schools. However, this cannot be ascribed only to the actions of the agents. The schools as sub-fields are also hierarchically structured, and the rules and regularities that define the schools as fields are exclusionary for some parents. In that sense, current struggles for survival within the schools should be thought in relation to the objective regularities of the schools as fields which are the product of previous struggles to a certain extent.

School A is more difficult to access/entrance due to the principal being stronger actor as "gatekeeper". More homogeneous social structure of the school as field that is mainly provided by the principal is more exclusionary towards some parents and children. In that sense, experience of exclusion mostly means move away from the school, back to the neighbourhood schools. Relatively easier access/entrance to School B, on the other hand, makes exclusionary structure of the school as field more conflictual. Experience of exclusion means a constant struggle to survive in School B.

In both schools, dynamics of exclusion demonstrate that the struggles within the schools as sub fields are also symbolic struggles in that perceptions and classifications of the agents take part, and through the subjective representations of the agents, socio-spatial divisions are retranslated into distinctions within the schools, and function as a means for exclusion.

Connected to his attempt to transcend the duality of subject and object, Bourdieu proposes that there is a homology between the social divisions and mental schemata, the latter is the embodiment of the former. He states that social groups and classes exist twice (Bourdieu, 2013, p. 296):

They exist in the objectivity of the first order, that which is recorded by distributions of material properties; and they exist in the objectivity of the second order, that of the contrasted classifications and representations produced by agents on the basis of a practical knowledge of these distributions such as they are expressed in lifestyles

Subjective representations are not mere reflections of the social divisions, but function as “instruments of domination”, moreover, they actively contribute to constitute the social divisions (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 13-14):

The socially constituted classificatory schemes through which we actively construct society tend to represent the structures out of which they are issued as natural and necessary, rather than as the historically contingent fallouts of a given balance of power between classes, “ethnic” groups, or genders. But if we grant that symbolic systems are social products that contribute to making the world, that they do not simply mirror the social relations but help constitute them

Accordingly, the symbolic representations that agents form and perform are not neutral but contribute to the exclusionary strategies of the agents. Here, the symbolic meaning of space or spatial divisions in the subjective representations of the agents are the fundamental parts of the struggles that form the schools as socio-spatial closures. As stated before, in Bourdieu’s understanding, physical space and mental schemata offers “twofold inscription” of social divisions; they converted to mental structures through the objectification in physical space, in other words, social divisions are embodied in the perceptions of the agents through the mediation of space. Moreover, in line with the functioning of the subjective representations as “instruments of domination”, rendering the structural divisions as natural, physical space/objectified social space naturalizes the social divisions in that “differences produced by social logic can then be seen to arise out of the nature of things” (Bourdieu, 2018, p. 107).

The perceptions and evaluations of the agents about the parents and students that point out spatial divisions in both schools hide social divisions stemming from the distributions of material properties. In that sense, structural social divisions transferred into the schools via the subjective representations of the agents as contrasted classifications through the mediation of space. Contrastd spatial classifications referring to the cultural/life-style differences which are the important symbolic indicators of the positional differences, naturalizes the positional differences stemming from the distributional inequalities within the schools. Life-style differences associated to the districts or neighbourhoods by the agents in the schools contribute to exclude “the undesirables”.

Now, I will focus on how these two popular schools are formed as socio-spatial closures differently in relation to their different locations within the socially and educationally ranked geography which effect the spatially mediated exclusionary dynamics within the schools.

5.6.1. School A: School effect

As stated before, School A is located at the top of the geographical hierarchy of the schooling field in terms of distribution of educational investments and agents. First of all, it is a school where the state’s educational resources were transferred within this uneven geography due to its establishment as a special school. However, this should be considered with its neighbourhood and the district. Çankaya is the district where the public educational investments are concentrated, also the focal point of the cultural and economic values. The school’s geographical location in an affluent neighbourhood in Çankaya where the competitive action of middle class parents in search for better quality education is most directed means much higher demand for the school. This is the main reason of the demand for the school from different districts of Ankara, so its province-wide popularity. Due to the top position of Çankaya within the socially ranked geographical space, access to the school requires a certain volume of capitals, social, cultural and economic. This inevitably makes social composition of the school being made up of families with more powerful positions when compared with School B. At the same time, considering the high

convertibility of economic capital into cultural capital in the field, structurally more powerful positions of the parents strengthen the schools' position in the schooling field.

As stated before, due to the parents' similarity in terms of the volume of cultural and economic capital they possess, the structural positions of the parents in School A are close. In that sense, the social composition in the school is homogenous, especially when compared with School B. Despite the highly broad catchment area composed of different neighbourhoods and districts with different positions in the geographical field, the homogenous social profile in the school is partly associated with the occupational similarity of parents due to the surrounding institutional workplaces, but the role of the principal in the formation of this homogenous social profile through the elimination and selection mechanisms is significant.

As discussed, the main motivation of the parents' schooling strategies in School A is choosing the best option, and their consideration of "people like us" is stronger. Therefore, while their strategies are exclusionary towards certain social groups, they mostly target at exclusivity already exists in the school. This reinforces the role of the school principal as "gatekeeper". Moreover, since the choosing the best option is the main motivation of the parents who are able to access more schools, the school is under more pressure to actively reproduce its position and differentiate educational service provided from other schools in order to meet the demand of the parents. In other words, since the parents' mobility is based more on pull of the school, the pull factors need to be reproduced within the school. This explains more crucial role of the principal as the de facto authority in both implementations outside the legal regulations and informal selectivity of the school. Since the demand for the school is higher, elimination and selection mechanisms are more easily used by the principal. In that sense, he is a more crucial actor in formation of School A as socio-spatial closure. On the other hand, similar positions of the parents, so the social homogeneity in the school is itself constitute the basis of exclusionary structure of the school as field. In that sense, the school's continuity as a privileged place lies especially in this homogeneous social composition in the school.

Although the principal complains about socially more heterogeneous character of the school when compared to the past, he accepts the distinctiveness when compared with other public schools. We can talk about a kind of cohesion in the school which mostly stems from similar socio-cultural, also economic status of families. The positional similarity of parents within the school as field is often exclusionary toward those in subordinate positions although they are few in number, but at the same time it is the reason why the school is so popular. It is possible to catch this in the expressions of the principal:

I called a parent, for example, the child was failed. I said, where do you come from? He said, I come from Etimesgut. I said it doesn't meet the purpose of bringing the child here. Why? The average here is 70, 80. Why do you give 400 liras for school bus service and 200 liras for food? He cannot pass the exam, go to a good high school. He said you think wrong. He said that my child is at least nurturing. Swearing, etc. outside, at least I leave him here, then I'm comfortable. He said he's with good friends, if I send him to the school in Etimesgut, I will lose my child. I looked; I thought the parent is right from that point. We always think about education but this not the only case

A similar point was also stated by the deputy principal. The difference of social profile of the school from the general profile of public schools in Ankara was often mentioned. Again, the exclusionary character of class-based homogeneity in the school can be seen clearly from her expressions:

For example, a student coming from Keçiören, with poor economic condition, also with poor capacity, cannot survive here. The parent comes and takes the child, and says, my child was oppressed here. There's something like that here (DP, School A)

The school as field, rules and regularities rooted in this homogeneity, its structure that are referred as “culture” or “aura” by the professionals is exclusionary for those who do not present desired and valued properties or present undesired ones:

It doesn't make sense for the children to come here from Sincan, Mamak, etc. They cannot keep the culture there alive, this place has a different culture, has an aura. She/he has to adapt right away. If she/he cannot adapt, that kid leaves here anyway. She/he says to her/his family that I can't do it, or I have

difficulties academically, the children's levels are different, I can't do it, she/he says take me from here. I had such students (T10, School A)

As can be seen from the quotes above and below, this often results in self-exclusion of those who do not exhibit desired properties or exhibit undesired properties, and the experience of exclusion for those mostly means move away from the school, back to the neighbourhood schools.

Even if she/he comes from a village in Sincan, the child cannot exhibit her/his behavior there. Here, she/he can join into the group and raise herself/himself up. If she/he exhibit that behavior, she/he is excluded, or she/he realized herself/himself and says why am I like this when everyone is like that? So, she/he is leaving (T10, School A)

Thus, the experience of exclusion in the school refers both to the objectivity of structure and subjectivity of experience and can be explained with discrepancy between habitus and field (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 471):

Objective limits become a sense of limits, a practical anticipation of objective limits acquired by experience of objective limits, "a sense of one's place" which leads one to exclude oneself from the goods, persons, places and so forth from which one is excluded

According to Bourdieu, the relationship between habitus and field, between subjective hopes and objective chances can take various forms, "from perfect fit to radical disjunction", when habitus confronts objective conditions "similar to those it is the product, it is perfectly adopted to the field, it feels at home" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 129-130). The expressions of the deputy principal below show how the relationship between the school as sub field and habituses of those excluded is based on an opposite feeling:

*Not everyone can come here. This place has a certain socio-cultural level. Those who come also say **here is not for the likes of us**, they are oppressed.*

Researcher: What do you mean by oppressed?

I mean, they cannot adapt. But there are those who say that she/he learns something more or less, though. In other words, there are those who say that let my child oppressed here instead of studying among the Syrian children (DP, School A)

Those who cannot adapt to the school and oppressed are those who are in the subordinated position regarding the objective structure of the distribution of capitals, this is clearly seen from the quota below:

There are 3-4 students in each class with very different socio-economic status, not many. 80% – 90% of our students are in good conditions socio-economically and culturally, so the profile is homogeneous. The remaining 10% – 15% are oppressed children.

Researcher: What do you mean by oppressed?

Those who cannot adopt to the school (T5, School A)

However, it is also understood that those who are oppressed or cannot adapt are mostly coming out of the jurisdictional area, especially from the less affluent districts of Ankara.

The outsiders, if they have been poorly educated before, cannot do here anyway. I had such students from Gölbaşı, Sincan, they could not do, they went back to where they were living, but in general they adapt to the different culture here (T10, School A)

The principal and deputy principal make a distinction between this group of children and others who are socially and spatially closer to the school. The distinction usually refers to difference in their behavior, language, cultural differences:

Researcher: Do you see any difference between those who come from outside and those who live around?

Of course, there is a cultural difference. The children coming from Mamak or Sincan are easily noticed. The child played in the street, learned to swear... There are also smart ones... For example, I had a student in the 5th grade, they came from Mamak somehow. I am giving lesson, he is in a completely different world, can't adapt. Our rhythm is different, we are constantly doing something, he is falling behind. Then, it was the second term, the family took the child, he went back to Mamak (DP, School A)

Where the students come, the district, function in the school as a sign of cultural distinctions. Perceptions of the teachers are not positive towards the ones who come from the deprived areas of the city and their judgements mainly refer to the cultural differences, as well.

There are students from Mamak, there are also those from Keçiören, Sincan and Emesisgut. There is not much difference in terms of economic level, but there is a difference in their behavior, even in their way of addressing, in their relations with their friends, in their conversations... This is actually a good thing for children from districts at the bottom, they have trouble for a while, but then they can gain something from being here. Of course, there are those who cannot adapt. For example, I have a student from Yenimahalle, he learned here the rules of eating while eating with his friends (T12, School A)

The geographical positions of the agents in geographical field are translated into internal divisions through the contrasted classifications of the agents in the school, and dominant and subordinated positions correlates with affluent districts and deprived districts, or sometimes with Çankaya and other districts in the school:

Those who come from afar usually come because of their parents' workplaces. There is a certain similarity due to the profession. But, for example, there are children who come from Mamak, they really show themselves. In terms of behavior, there is divergence according to districts. There is not a big difference behaviorally among those from Yenimahalle or Çankaya, because I think that the parents have a certain level of education, because the parents are the ones raising the child. But, the children of uneducated parents have behavioral problems, also their academic success is low. They cannot guide their children well. Peer bullying is more common among them, they may be prone to physical violence (T13, School A)

In that sense, through the mediation of space, the positional differences rooted in the distribution of resources turns into symbolic representations, agents' spatial classifications refer to the cultural differences which are the fundamental symbolic indicators of the positional differences. In other words, through the representations of the districts or neighbourhoods where the students and parents come, through the symbolic meaning of place, positional differences become cultural/lifestyle distinctions in the school. Furthermore, as Bourdieu asserts, "symbolic systems are not only instruments of knowledge, but function as instruments of domination" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 13). When the hierarchies stemming from the

distribution of material properties become cultural distinctions in the perceptions of the agents through the mediation of space, they become naturalized. For example, “behavioral problems” or academic failure are seen to arise out of coming/living in certain districts.

They certainly come from very different backgrounds, which creates a serious problem for us, behavioral problem. The number of students live around is very few. They gathered here from different districts. You can hear all kinds of words they use in outside, streets, games (T11, School A)

Moreover, in connection to the naturalization of structural inequalities, contrasted spatial classifications that refer to the cultural/life-style differences function as a means for exclusion. For example, the distinctive culture, the school is usually emphasized in the interviews to have, and which is actually refer to the homogenous social structure of the school as sub field, should be preserved according to the teachers. This is exclusionary towards the ones who come from certain districts of the city that symbolizes different culture/life-style, so towards those who do not display cultural properties required to survive in the school. When the cultural/life style differences are associated with spatial divisions symbolically, those who are excluded are the children coming from the districts at the bottom positions in order to protect the exclusionary structure arising from the social homogeneity in the school:

We look at those who bring their children from far away, for example, we talk among ourselves, she/he comes from Mamak, Keçiören, but there is nothing to develop in the child, or there is, but we cannot strive. For example, she/he may be exposed to peer pressure in the classroom, and there can be other problems. Then we talk to the parents, we say that it is not worth coming all this way, it is not actually meaningful. For example, I have not seen a student who came from afar and became very successful in 11 years. There is a certain number of such students in this school, but few, so the school can preserve its own culture. Those who cannot adapt to this culture go back (T16, School A)

In that sense, symbolic meaning of space, spatial divisions in the perceptions of the agents, their spatial classifications that are rooted in the social divisions contribute to the reproduction of exclusionary structure of the school as field, so the symbolic meaning of space is the fundamental part of the struggles that form the schools as socio-spatial closures.

As seen, the professionals, especially the principal is the key actor in the formation of the school as socio-spatial closure. Since the exclusivity of the school mainly depends on its socially powerful and homogenous social composition, reproduction of the schools' position is based upon ensuring the maintenance of this social composition. Homogeneous social composition serves as a guarantee of educational quality, at the same time turns into a mechanism of exclusion. Preserving the educational quality, the exclusivity of the school justifies exclusion of the children and parents who do not display desired properties. This is achieved through the naturalization effect of space. Spatial divisions in the perceptions of the professionals translating social divisions into cultural distinctions serves to the reproduction of exclusionary structure of the school as sub-field. The division between Çankaya and the districts in subordinate position in the schooling field such as Sincan, Keçiören, Mamak is reproduced within the school. In that sense, as the creation of educational inequalities at school level, the formation of School A as a popular public school, while creates district-wide educational inequalities in terms of school differentiation, reproduces province-wide socially and educationally hierarchical structure.

5.6.2. School B: Neighbourhood effect

Within this hierarchical structure of the schooling field, its location in a subordinate position differentiates the dynamics that form School B as popular school. First of all, its affluent neighbourhood, and its symbolic effect on the schools' popularity is similar to that of School A. Moreover, its being pilot school has a similar effect. It is the school where unevenly distributed public educational investments transferred spatially.

However, subordinate position of Keçiören within the hierarchical geography of schooling field limits the popularity of the school with the district. The demand for the school is less than that of School A, and it is limited with the parents in Keçiören. Although the catchment area of the school is more limited, and parents come from relatively close neighbourhoods, the social composition in the school is more heterogeneous when compared to School A. Almost all the parents who come from

out of jurisdictional area of School B come from certain neighbourhoods of Keçiören and Yenimahalle like Şentepe, Yükseltepe, Esertepe where used to be gecekondu areas in the recent past.

As stated, the main motivation of the parents who come from these neighbourhoods to the school is escape from the bad option with strong social considerations. Although to be able to come/ability to access to the school requires a certain volume of economic, cultural and social capital, the effect of neighbourhood on the homogeneity of the social composition of the school is more limited when compared with that of Mustafa Kemal Neighbourhood and Çankaya. Although the principal is a significant actor as “gatekeeper”, her role in exclusion by selection is not as strong as that of the school principal in School A, mostly due to the lower demand for the school. In line with these, on the social composition of the school which is more heterogeneous, the district-wide socio-spatial segregation patterns are effective. Thus, unlike School A, being a popular public school creates a more heterogenous social composition in School B. In that sense, School B is not a socially segregated school as School A.

The reason why the social composition of the school is relatively more heterogeneous is the different social profile of the outsiders from those living in the neighborhood, but still the outsiders are minority in numbers; 34% of the students. Although not as much as in School A, there is a certain level of cohesion in the school as well, stemming from the similarity of the positions of the parents, who are the majority. However, there is a clear distinction between these two groups of parents and students, between insiders and outsiders, and this is mostly based on cultural differences:

There is no a big difference between the students, but you can notice the student coming from outside the surrounding area. You can understand from her/his behavior. It is clear from her/his behavior that she/he is unsupervised by the family. The parents on this side are more controller. There is a common sense in school that the troublemakers are those who come from upwards (T8, School B)

Since the distinctive position of the school is symbolically and objectively established to the extent that it was far from these neighborhoods that used to be gecekondu areas, the children coming from these neighbourhoods are in a constant struggle to survive in the school. For these students, the school is a field that they have to adapt, so the relationship between their habituses and school as field is based on discrepancy. This is clearly seen in the expressions of the teachers below:

The outsiders are poorer. They have behavioral disorders, differences in manners... They come from deprived areas (varoşlar), they cannot adapt (T5, School B)

There is a difference between those who come from outside and those who live in the vicinity, because the child is first educated in the family; cleanliness, behavior, respect and love... Children who receive this education do not have difficulty here, but those who come from outside, those who come by moving have difficulties. Socio-economic, cultural differences emerge here. But coming here also requires a certain income, so I wonder if there is not much difference. Now, they have money, but they are culturally inadequate, that is the biggest problem today (T10, School B)

Like in School A, the students who cannot adapt to the school or have difficulties in the school are those who are in the subordinate position in distributional sense. For example, a significant reason of desirability of the school according to the teachers, is its good vicinity, as they said, “here is the most elite location of Keçiören”, and being away from deprived areas (*varoşlar*) One of the teachers illustrated this situation as follows: “as you go upwards, the number of *apaçi* per square meter rises” (DP1, School B), then he explained “*apaçi*” as troublesome students. Afterward, he also added; “as you go upwards, rents fall”. Thus, it is understood that troublesome students are the outsiders with low socio-economic status, although it is not stated explicitly.

The professionals’ perceptions about the district, the distinction they make between the school and surrounding area, and that neighbourhoods shows itself inside the school as the distinction between students coming from outside and living around the school, between outsiders and insiders. Their perceptions about the outsiders are not positive, and there is a general view that they reduce the rate of success. However, academic success is not the only criterion, this can be caught easily in the expression

of a teacher; “*look at the school yard, if you see two or three students acting badly (hareketi bozuk), they are the ones coming from outside*” (T1, School B). In this sense, according to the teachers, the trouble makers are mostly these outsider students. Like in School A, the distinction between outsiders and insiders is made on the basis of behavior, language, life-style, cultural differences. For example, a teacher who has been working at the school for 24 years, states:

In the past years, the most problematic children, those who had discipline problems, almost without exception, were those from the lower income group and those who came from outside. They could not adapt. Last year, I had two students, they were like couch grass; their relationships with friends, their speech, behaviors etc. are standing out. Our children here are...okay, I said there is a moral collapse in general, but our children are at least politer to each other, they speak politely, they speak well, their language is better. However, the neighbourhoods they came, lifestyle, the way of communicate in there are more vulgar. They were easily noticed even when they are sitting down (T11, School B)

Her expressions above demonstrate how the neighbourhoods the students come/live are translated into internal division through the professionals’ perceptions and contrasted classifications. Through their representations, subordinate and dominant positions in distributional sense turn into symbolic distinction between outsiders and insiders and positional differences become cultural lifestyle differences in the school.

Here, the role of space in the transformation of the structural inequalities to the representations of the teachers is crucial. Space, through the objectification of social hierarchies “functions as a principal of vision and division” (Bourdieu, 2018, p. 107), and through this objectification in the structures of space, social hierarchies translated into mental structures. In school, the transformation of social divisions into lifestyle differences is mediated by space, and even the lifestyle differences are symbolically identified with spatial divisions. This is clearly seen in the teachers’ evaluations on the cultural differences that cannot be separated from divisions they make symbolically between the neighbourhoods the outsiders come from and the surrounding area.

For example, a teacher, living in Şentepe, who says that “students coming from outside affect the cultural level of this school, they lower the level”, establishes a close relationship between the urban transformation history of that neighborhoods and the outsiders’ cultural differences. According to her, in these neighborhoods, since the transformation history is more recent, the families have not yet “urbanized”, and although there was a transformation in their external appearance, they could not change internally:

Okay, looking from the outside, the mother may be very well-groomed, but in her pronunciation, speech, she still maintains that town culture in Central Anatolia. So, maybe there is an external transformation, but they are not aware that there must be an internal transformation. For example, while waiting in line, she/he is disrespectful to your turn, her/his speech is also rude in terms of pronunciation, there is no effort to correct her/his Turkish... (T3, School B)

According to her, the outsiders bring this “cultural distortion” directly to the school:

They bring the same distorted, chaotic cultural structure here. For example, speaking without asking to speak, the other child has learned this, but she/he finds the courage to say whatever comes to her/his mind, or she/he cannot have that empathetic understanding in relations with her/his friends (T3, School B)

Another teacher who underlines the behavioral difference between the insiders and outsiders, explains this in a similar way and demonstrates how social hierarchies become cultural/lifestyle differences by the teachers’ and the principal’s symbolic representations of spatial divisions.

Here is where the traditional and the modern clash. In that neighbourhoods upwards, the houses are modernized, but sub-culture? That region transformed from gecekondus. We have young men who come by luxury car but make tea in samovar and dance with Ankara havası (T4, School B)

Afterwards, she states that they have more problems with outsiders in behavioral sense, since the children from outside have street culture and “hitting, pushing, pulling, touching behaviors are more common among outsiders”. She also gives clues about the perception of the parents about the outsiders, stating that if outsiders

are also unsuccessful, parents may not want their children to be friends with them. This causes them to be excluded by the other children.

Thus, the parents' perceptions are also negative about outsiders, and this is also based on the following reason; it is common among parents to think that the overcrowd in the school and therefore the inability to shift to a full-time education is due to the outsiders. For example, one of the deputy principals, who is also a parent since his child has just started the school states:

If I speak as a parent, I don't like the fact that there are too many outsiders. Go to your own neighborhood, why? Because my child, if you had gone to your own neighborhood, my child would have been educated in a 25-student class, not in a 35-student class. The quality of the education he received would be much higher. I wish they didn't come from outside (DP1, School B)

However, not just coming out of the jurisdictional area of the school, but coming from the neighbourhoods that symbolize behavioral problems and different lifestyle is the reason of negative perception. For example, the deputy principal continues underlining the cultural difference of the outsiders from the insiders:

For example, we have parents whose financial situation is very good, and there are those who are the opposite. These kids are in the same class. When there is a problem at school, it is usually caused by the students from outside. It is said that look, you come all the distance from there, at least it's worth coming. Even if this school is good, if your child is not good, it is useless. Your child will adapt to the environment so that it will worth (DP1, School B)

His expressions also show how the distinction made on the basis of culture/lifestyle contribute to the exclusion of the outsiders. The “environment”, in his expressions, to which the outsiders have to adapt refers to the rules and regularities, structure of the school as sub field, and the outsiders are the ones who do not exhibit desired properties or behaviours required to survive in the school. However, the division that is made at the symbolic level on the basis of culture or lifestyle causes the objective basis of this discrepancy to be ignored. When the discrepancy between the school as field and the habituses of the outsiders turns into cultural or lifestyle clash through the symbolic representations of the agents, it is easier to exclude the ones who “cannot adapt” to the “cultural environment”.

For example, it is understood that the conflict between the outsiders and the insiders has existed in the school for a long time and from time to time by eliminating the outsiders, the conflict is made more manageable by the principals. For example, a parent whose daughter is in the 6th grade, but who has been a parent of the school for a long time because her older child had previously studied at this school tells how they, as the ones who live in the neighbourhood, the insiders, were negative towards the outsiders. She states that the school started to accept fewer students, or more importantly, particular students they selected among outsiders after parents complained about problems such as quarrels and unrest caused by the outsiders:

In fact, we did not lean towards those who came from outside at those times. Why? For example, fights started. When children from different cultures came, they could not get along with the children in this neighborhood. We had some trouble like that. But later on, the principal set some stricter rules against those who came from far away. After that they started not to register, actually let me tell, they accepted the quality ones, by selecting, for example there were still many who came by school bus. Afterwards, the behavior of our students got better (P20, School B)

As can be seen in her expressions above, the distinction between the insiders and outsiders that is made on the basis of cultural differences, disconnecting from the roots in the social hierarchy function as a means for domination. Here, the naturalization effect of space is also important in the sense that cultural differences of “behavioral problems” are seen to arise out of living in that neighbourhoods. Her expressions above and below also demonstrate how the “informal selectivity” of the school is realized through the negotiations between the parents and the school principals.

As I said, an elimination was made, it was 7-8 years ago. At those times, the police were constantly coming to the school, there were fights, but after that, there was no such problem as the students coming from outside were eliminated.

Researcher: Despite this, the school hasn't lost anything from its reputation

Yes, because it was known that the problem was related to the outsiders, everybody reacted to that. Then it got better.

Researcher: What kind of reactions?

It was being complained to the principal, it was said not to accept students from outside, then the outsiders were eliminated (P20, School B)

As seen, the relatively weaker role of the school principal in exclusion by selection is mostly realized according to the parents' demands. This indicates that the school as socio-spatial closure is formed mainly by the strategies of the parents exclusionary towards the ones in subordinate position and come from the certain neighbourhoods of Keçiören. Despite their social considerations to avoid "people not like us", the division between insiders and outsiders is clear within the school. Formation of School B, while create further educational inequalities within Keçiören which is in a subordinate position in schooling field, is realized through strengthening the subordinate position of these parents living in certain neighbourhoods of the district in the distributional struggle.

5.7. Concluding remarks: Socio-spatial closure and educational inequalities

These two popular schools express creation of school hierarchy/differentiation by the competitive action for access to better quality public education. Both cases demonstrate that school hierarchy is created by the reciprocal strategies and practices of the demand and supply side actors. Moreover, their strategies and practices are generated by the educational structure operates on the agents unequally. Both cases represent the action of parents who cannot access the prestigious private schools but have the capacity to refuse provided educational service to themselves. More importantly, both represent the actions of parents whose access to "good education" has become increasingly difficult and competitive while "good education" maintains its importance for the social mobility function for them in this unequal educational structure. However, contextualizing competitive action for access to educational resources geographically through these two cases have shown how educational structure operate on these parents unequally. Accordingly, how their competitive actions create educational inequalities/school differentiation in a spatially specific way.

First of all, questioning school decisions of the parents revealed different motivations, decision making process and strategies to access “better quality education” between the two groups of parents. The parents’ access to “better quality education” depends not only on their social positions, but also geographical positions with respect to distribution of educational resources and agents. Their residential location and space they can engage through mobilities regarding the availability and sufficiency of educational resources condition their strategies. These two both condition their motivations and constraining or enabling to gain knowledge about the schools through social networks effect deployment of capitals to access. In that sense, schooling strategies and decisions of the parents conditioned spatially regarding both the opportunities available and the knowledge of the opportunities. As discussed before, in the literature on social class and educational inequalities, studies show how the school decisions of the parents differ in terms of motivations, capacities and abilities depending on their social class positions, and how middle classes skillfully engage with education system. On the basis of the cases of popular schools it can be asserted that the middle classes’ engagement with education system also depends on their geographical positions with respect to geographical distribution of educational supply and demand.

In that sense, competitive action to access resources excluding those in subordinate positions depends on their social and geographical positions through motivations for access and ability to access. Accordingly, whom to be excluded by their actions also depends on their geographical positions, but mediated by the schools in creation of social inequalities in education.

Considering geographical context does not only allow to reveal intra-class differences in schooling strategies and practices, but it is also important in understanding the relationship between social class and educational inequalities. The cases of popular schools have demonstrated that although seek for lack of social diversity is common for the two groups of parents, how the parents’ social considerations translate into educational inequalities depends on the actors of educational supply and spatial context. In other words, parents’ exclusionary strategies are mediated by spatio-institutional dynamics in creation of educational

inequalities. For example, in School A, the parents' seek for exclusivity and "tolerable level of social mix" is ensured mainly by the school principal and educational practices in the school. Parents' exclusionary strategies for access to the school are mainly school oriented motivated by choosing the best option, so benefitting from the school effect. Accordingly, this is ensured by the school. Assurance of the maintenance of school quality or exclusivity excludes the "outsiders". In School B, on the other hand, parents' exclusionary closure strategies for access to the school are mainly based on escaping from the negative neighbourhood effect. Exclusion of those coming from those neighbourhoods, the "outsiders" is ensured by more explicit negotiations between the parents and the principal, and this cannot be ensured as in School A. How these internal dynamics differ depends on the geographical context in terms of both educational supply and demand. First of all, due to the fact that Çankaya has better educational opportunities it is the first target of the parents' competitive action in public education. Higher demand for School A in relation to being located in Çankaya, reinforces school selectivity, and reproduce the school's position in the field. Although school selectivity is also seen in School B, it cannot create a socially segregated school as in School A since the demand is limited to the district in relation to the subordinate position of Keçiören in schooling field.

The mediation of exclusionary strategies of parents within schools indicates that creation of social inequalities in education is not mere consequences of exclusionary strategies between the parents. This reveals more active role of the schools in creation of social inequalities in education depending on their geographical positions with respect to distribution of educational supply and demand.

The schools' role in creation of social inequalities through exclusion brings us to the relationship between rules of access and socio-spatial segregation. The cases of two popular schools have demonstrated that socially segregated schools are not direct results of socio-spatial segregation. If that were the case for example, socially more homogenous composition would be formed in School B. Spatial accessibility is determined by the internal dynamics of the schools that change according to their geographical position, as well as the ability of the parents.

Both cases have shown that ability of managing/overcoming distance is not enough to be accepted to the schools. Although the parents overcome the restrictions of physical distance by deploying capitals, they may not be accepted, or survive in the schools. Where they come from, the residential location, is significant not only in terms of physical distance for access, but also in terms of symbolic meaning for acceptability. In both schools, who will be accepted and who will not, is highly dependent upon the perceptions of the professionals. Life-style/cultural differences associated to the districts and neighbourhoods by them function with the logic of inclusion and exclusion. As the symbolic systems, “*contribute to making the world, that they do not simply mirror the social relations but help constitute them*” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 13-14), spatial divisions contribute to maintain dominant positions. Thus, school hierarchy is not a mere reflection of socio-spatial segregation, but created through it. This is common in both schools, but while the spatial divisions in the perceptions of the professionals refer province-wide social inequalities, this is district-wide in School B.

In that sense, formation of School A as a popular school reproduces the subordinate positions in the geography of unevenly distributed educational supply and demand. School B on the other hand expresses creation of educational inequalities district-wide, through strengthening the subordinate position of the parents living in certain neighbourhoods of the district. Rather than transition of social inequalities into educational inequalities, their formation refers to retranslation of educational inequalities in distributional sense into further social inequalities through mediation of space.

If I return to the question at the beginning; why educational inequalities, specifically public school differentiation, exists and persists despite public investments on education? The answer of this question lies in how school differentiation is created. The reliance of the thesis on the concept of socio-spatial closure in explaining the creation of school differentiation is based upon the fact that popular schools do not express simply the educational inequalities arise from the variations in received education depending upon the social positions of the families as a result of the lack

of state investments. Rather than that, they express creation of further inequalities on uneven geographical distribution of educational resources. Thus, beyond the reproduction of social inequalities in education, they express creation of further inequalities in education through mediation of space.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In the thesis, I focused on schools to investigate on educational inequalities, questioning why public school differentiation (at middle school level) exists despite states' investments on education. I focused on both supply and demand sides of education with a spatial perspective. While focusing on the schools for the investigation on the educational inequalities, I developed a multi-level analysis composed of individual, school and policy levels. In that sense, I contextualized the actions of the parents that create educational inequalities organizationally, and institutionally.

In order to investigate on school differentiation in public education, I asked how do some public schools differentiate among others and become popular? Based on the contradiction between the concentration of school service buses in especially metropolitan cities like Ankara and residential address-based school placement system in Turkey. This contradiction indicating spatial mismatch between educational supply and demand, led me to develop a spatial analysis for the educational inequalities including both educational supply and demand while focusing on schools. I conducted field research in two “popular” public middle schools in Keçiören and Çankaya. On the basis of the empirical findings of the research I argued that popular public schools which receive high demand out of their enrollment areas, express creation of educational inequalities at school level by reciprocally adopted strategies and practices of the parents and school professionals (principals and teachers) driven by their perceptions. Based on the fact that parents' strategies to access these schools are developed in relation to the inequalities led by the education system and policies, I institutionally contextualized the schools and actions of the parents.

Turkey provided a highly centralized, competitive education system which is prone to create inequalities structurally, also spatially due to the uneven geographical distribution of educational resources, to contextualize the schools which have little autonomy, and parents who are not allowed for school choice. Ankara as the city example provided the geographical context analyzed and presented with a two-layered framework to the spatial inequalities; province-wide and district-wide. While the former is offered for the uneven distribution of educational investments among the districts of Ankara, the latter is offered for the retranslation of the former into school differentiation through the strategies and practices of the actors. Therefore, schools are geographically contextualized regarding their positions in the district-wide inequalities, and positions of their districts in the province-wide inequalities relationally.

6.1. Empirical findings

First of all, the thesis finds out that education system and policies, also spatial inequalities led by locational decisions of state (investment decisions and school placement system) matters for the relationship between social inequalities and education. Contrary to the Anglo-Saxon education systems where schools are more autonomous, inter-school competition is supported officially, and parental choice is an official policy, highly centralized education system in Turkey where schools have little autonomy, parents are not allowed to choose school, and which has a claim to neutralize the quality differences across the schools through centralized schooling system, school level actors, the school principals and parents, their perceptions and daily practices within the schools have a significant role in creation of educational inequalities. Contrary to the studies predominantly focus on the “pro-choice” countries and finds out that parents and their choices/strategies which are motivated by their social class considerations are the main reasons of school segregation, in the two cases of popular schools in Ankara, strategies and perceptions of the school principals are equally significant in the formation of popular public schools. Their critical role mainly arises from the gap between the centrally designed education policies and daily operation of schools that provide them a room for maneuver to

take initiative and find their own way to solve the educational problems they faced. School finance is one of the most critical mechanisms that allows this gap to be filled by creating inequalities at the school level. Thus, the finding of the thesis in this regard is different from the studies revealing that school funding system in Turkey creates inter-school inequalities due to the socio-economic differences of the parents. Rather than that, social composition of popular schools is formed through the mediation of school funding, and in that sense, it turns into a means for informal school selectivity.

Connected to these, secondly, the thesis finds out that “informal choosing” of parents, allowed again by the legal gaps and exceptions, is subject to school mediation, although motivated by social considerations. This reveals that access to these schools is not determined technically by the placement system; but the residential address-based school placement system is negotiated between the principals and parents. Since access to the neighbourhoods through false address declarations etc. is not a guarantee for access to the schools, but approval of the principals is usually needed, a more school centered process is seen in the case of popular schools, and this unfolds the significance of internal dynamics of the schools.

Thirdly, the thesis finds out that the parents’ evaluations on schools when they decide, are not simply based on the objective academic success criteria, but subjective meaning they attributed to the schools and the neighbourhoods is effective in their decisions. This is claimed in the thesis to indicate that formation of popular schools and more generally differentiation among the schools in a hierarchical way have a strong symbolic dimension. Triggering the role of symbolic representations of the parents in creation of school differentiation is the lack of information that allows parents to evaluate the schools objectively. Such an information is intentionally hidden by the authorities on the grounds that it will create difference in demand between the schools.

Fourthly, a more school-centered process in Ankara within the context of popular schools indicates a different relationship between schools and their neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhood is significant but not sufficient geographical scale for the contextualization of popular schools geographically. Access to these schools, for the significant number of parents, is based on stretching the borders of the enrolment area determined by the placement system. This necessitates to consider spatial inequalities related with the socio-spatial segregation within a broader geography, but the geographical width of the catchment areas depends on the internal dynamics of schools.

In comparison with School A and School B the thesis finds out that the internal dynamics of the schools vary according to the geographical position of the schools; in relation to the province-wide and district-wide patterns of socio-spatial segregation, and distribution of educational services. Both of the schools are located in the affluent neighbourhoods, but subordinated position of Keçiören regarding the distribution of both public educational services and socio-economic status in comparison to Çankaya, also more heterogenous distribution of social composition in the district and in the vicinity of the school produce different dynamics which form the school as a popular public school.

First of all, the main motivation of the parents' school decisions in School B is to escape from the neighbourhood schools, avoided by them not only because they are academically unsuccessful, but also socially heterogenous. In that sense, while they avoid the neighbourhood schools what they seek is mainly to avoid "people not like us". In School A, the main motivation of the parents whose decisions are based on evaluating and eliminating more options, is choosing the best option. Their social considerations refer more to the school and surrounding area of the school, rather than the neighbourhoods they come, so to be with "people like us" is more strong consideration for them.

More distant location of School A in Çankaya from the deprived areas and more homogenous social composition in the vicinity of the school inevitably create a more homogenous social composition composed of parents with high levels of social, economic and cultural capital in School A. This is important in differentiation of educational services provided by the school. The parents' intervention in the

educational processes and in physical conditions in the school is more common in School A. They more usually push the teachers due to their more powerful position vis-à-vis that of teachers. Their stronger demands for education “unlike standard public school education” is also effective on more autonomous actions of the principal; the implementations out of legal regulations are more common in School A. Moreover, the principal is more critical actor who provides informal school selectivity. This also strengthens the homogenous social composition in the school which is exclusionary.

On the other hand, the location of School B in Keçiören, closer to the deprived areas and socially heterogenous neighbourhoods create a more heterogenous social composition in the school compared to School A. Parents’ intervention in educational processes, physical conditions and their demands for exclusivity are similar but more limited compared to School A. Although the principal in School B is also critical in the formation of social composition of the school, her role in exclusion by selection is more limited and more dependent upon the exclusionary strategies of the parents.

Geographical expression of these dynamics is broader catchment area of School A, composed of different neighbourhoods and districts; catchment area of School B is limited with Keçiören. Although both of these schools express creation of school hierarchy, their different geographical positions that generate their internal dynamics make difference in creation of educational inequalities. While formation of School B reproduces the province-wide educational inequalities stem from the uneven distribution of educational supply and demand, formation of School B as a popular school creates district-wide inequalities.

6.2. Theoretical findings

On the basis of the empirical finding of the study on the critical role of school principals in elimination and selection of the parents the schools serve, also in differentiation of educational services provided by the schools, so their role in the formation of popular schools, the thesis underlines the actors of educational supply

and schools as organizations of educational service delivery in creation of educational inequalities. As the institutional dynamics which form popular schools differentiates depending on the geographical context, the thesis introduces spatio-institutional dimension to educational inequalities.

The inclusion of the supply side of education in the analysis by placing the school at the center is an epistemological contribution to the understanding of education and social inequalities. On the other hand, contrary to the demand-oriented approaches to spatiality of educational inequalities, by incorporating the spatiality of educational supply into the analysis, the thesis contributes to the understanding of spatiality of educational inequalities.

The geographical perspective which includes inequalities stemming from educational supply should not only consider the insufficiency of educational investments that leads to reduction of quality differences among the schools to demand-side differences, but focus on the uneven distribution of state's educational investments. This provides a relational perspective to the quality differences among the schools that is necessary in order to grasp the dynamic character of educational inequalities implicit to the inter-school mobility of parents.

Field theory provides this relational perspective. The thesis by integrating spatial inequalities regarding uneven distribution of educational resources and agents to the field regards spatial inequalities inherent to the hierarchical structure of the field. Moreover, through the agents' residential place and the space they can engage through mobilities with respect to the educational services available, introduces the concept of spatial capital which enables the agents to manage/overcome the distance and access to the schools. Therefore, spatiality is also integrated to the field as the ability of agents. Another axis which connects space and field is the symbolic representations of the agents. With the help of Bourdieu's understanding of "double reality" which regards social structures and mental structures mutually constitutive, the thesis highlights symbolic meaning of space in forming the field driving the

strategies of the agents. In that sense, integration of space to the notion of field through both its objective structure and subjective representations of the agents is a theoretical contribution.

The role of space in both objectively structuring the field and subjectively driving the strategies of the agents, enables to develop concept of socio-spatial closure in the thesis. The concept of social closure refers to the formation of social divisions through the competitive actions of the agents for access to the resources by excluding the ones in subordinate positions. Socio-spatial closure introduced in the thesis on the other hand, first, refers to the spatiality of exclusionary strategies of the agents. Their access to the unevenly distributed educational resources is based on exclusion of the subordinate groups spatially. Here, the symbolic meaning of space is crucial in excluding those in subordinate positions, so ensuring the domination of the powerful. Exclusion of “the undesirables” is realized through the spatial representations, classifications and judgements of the agents. Through the symbolic representations of spatial divisions by the agents, social divisions turn into cultural distinctions and justifies the exclusion of the ones in structurally less powerful position. In that sense, social closure realized through the mediation of space. Moreover, this is not only related with the parents who seek for exclusivity, but also the principals and the teachers’ ensuring exclusivity. In other words, actors of supply side of education complement the competitive action of the parents. This allows to regard schools as socio-spatial closures, as the exclusive places entrance to where requires desired properties.

The findings of the thesis on both the critical role of the actors of educational supply and spatiality of educational inequalities, firstly suggest that a comprehensive theoretical approach on how social inequalities exist and perpetuate in the context of access to resources, should consider how the resources are distributed. It should also consider how service providers affect social groups’ access to the resources.

The findings on the differences between the two cases in their formation as exclusive and exclusionary places suggest that integration of spatial dynamics of inequalities with the concept of social closure provides a more nuanced understanding of social

stratification that is the purpose in the development of the concept. An approach to the educational inequalities that is based on the inclusion of the spatial dynamics allows us to grasp different mechanisms that lead social closure, so there may be different forms of closure depending upon the mediation of space between educational supply and demand.

Accordingly, this requires a spatial approach to the inequalities that is beyond treating school differentiation as the spatial reflection of social closure. More precisely, what socio-spatial closure suggests is the integration of space with the creation of educational inequalities which refers process, rather than result. The role of space both in conditioning the competitive actions of the agents and as a means of exclusion suggest that the positions of the agents in the distributive struggle and their access to the services are not independent from space in distributive and relational sense. The concept of socio-spatial closure expresses integration of structural inequalities to the action-centered understanding of inequality offered by the concept of social closure. Therefore, it can overcome the criticisms directed to the concept of social closure for being ambiguous about how subordinate and dominant positions are identified (see, Murphy, 1986).

6.3. Further research topics

In order to address to the issues which came up with the thesis and can be the subject of further research, some limitations of the study should be mentioned. First of all, the thesis mainly focused on the spatiality of educational inequalities and it is a product of an attempt to provide a spatial perspective, at the same time to reveal the relationality between the structural inequalities and actions of the agents in creation of inequalities. For this purpose, it focused on the school as the most appropriate level for the analysis of the actions of the agents, and state and education policies were included in the context of their generative effect on the competitive actions of the agents, notably their role in the uneven distribution of educational resources. The purpose to provide a spatialized analysis to the educational inequalities caused the study to limit the focus with the relationship between school as field and field of education, while leaving out the relationship between the field of education and other

fields, more precisely the field of power. In that sense, the dynamics of field of education derived from the struggles within dominant class which holds power in different fields are not included in the study. Thus, some issues that constitute important lines of tension in the operation of the field of education in Turkey, but that need to be addressed in relation to the divisions in the field of power, or in relation to the political field are left out of the scope of the study. For example, based on the public and academic debates on “Islamization” or increasing religiosity in the education system of Turkey especially in the post-2000s period it can be asserted that secularism-Islamism divide and tension between the secular and Islamist powers constitute a significant principle in hierarchization of the field of education in Turkey. Research on how this forms the dynamics of school differentiation will require larger number of schools including private schools, but ideological dimension of the decisions of the parents, professionals and the policy makers remains as a subject to be investigated and included in the studies on educational inequality in Turkey. In these studies which can be expected to include macro scale analysis as well, how to comprise the spatial dimension stands as an important issue to be considered. Developing a multi-scalar approach to the educational inequalities in Turkey is important in that sense, and the scale literature will be helpful for the integration of field and space with a multi-scalar approach.

Within the scope of the thesis and its focus on school level, some other issues that may be the subjects of further research can also be mentioned. In the thesis, I focused on the popular public schools which receive high demand out of their enrolment areas, and have positive recognition. The field research has shown that both private and public schools hierarchically differentiate in terms of prestige in the eyes of the parents. Accordingly, I divided the schools into three main groups regarding desirability which partly coincide with academic success in objective sense. The popular public schools I focused for the research placed in between position in the hierarchy. This division is based on the finding that division among the schools is more complex than dual division between public and private schools; both public and private schools differentiate in themselves in terms of desirability.

On the basis of this finding, research on unpopular public schools which serve mainly to their neighbourhood population can be a contribution to the understanding of public school differentiation. The cases of two popular schools do not allow an approach to the spatiality of educational inequalities within the scope of neighbourhood effect, but my research hints at negative neighborhood effect for these kinds of schools. A comparison between unpopular public schools with different neighbourhood contexts would be illuminating for the spatiality of educational inequalities in public education. Similarly, differentiation among the private schools would be another research topic. Since placement to private schools is not based on placement regulations, how they regulate the demand, or their locational decisions can also contribute to the understanding of spatiality of educational inequalities.

My research has shown that Çankaya is in dominant position in terms of geographical distribution of educational investments and social composition, and the higher demand for School A when compared to School B is mostly connected to its location. However, since not all the schools in Çankaya are popular, research and comparative study on public schools in different neighbourhood contexts in Çankaya can contribute to the further understanding of effect of the dominant position of the district.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



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16 MART 2020

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Mustafa Kemal BAYIRBAĞ

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız Aslı GÜRTUNCA'nın "Eğitim ve Sosyo-Mekansal Adalet: Ankara'da Özel Okul Servisleri Örneği" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve 105 ODTU 2020 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Prof. Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY
Başkan

Prof. Dr. Tolga CAN
Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ali Emre TURGUT
Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ
Üye

Doç. Dr. Pınar KAYGAN
Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ
Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Süreyya Özcan KABASAKAL
Üye

B. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Grtunca, Aslı

Nationality: Turkish (TC)

Date and Place of Birth: 16 March 1988, Zonguldak

email: gurtunca@metu.edu.tr

EDUCATION

| Degree | Institution | Year of Graduation |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| PhD | METU Urban Policy Planning and Local Governments | 2022 |
| MS | Ankara University Urban and Environmental Sciences | 2015 |
| BS | METU International Relations | 2011 |
| High School | Atatrk Anadolu High School, Zonguldak | 2006 |

WORK EXPERIENCE

| Year | Place | Enrollment |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 2018-Present | METU Urban Policy Planning and Local Governments | Research Assistant |
| 2014-2018 | Public Administration Institute for Turkey and Middle East (TODAİE) | Research Assistant |
| 2012-2014 | Yandex | Assessor |

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English (YDS:88.75/100; METU EPE: 87.50/100)

PROJECTS

1. (2015-2016) “Search for Service Delivery Methods in the Light of New Legal Regulations on Local Governments: District Municipalities”. Research Project funded by Ministry of Development, PAITME (TODAİE), Ankara.

2. (2014-2015) Search for Service Delivery Methods in the Light of New Legal Regulations on Local Governments: Metropolitan Municipalities. Research Project funded by Ministry of Development, PAITME (TODAİE), Ankara.

PRESENTATIONS

1.Gürtunca, A., (2016), “Urban Workers: Working Life in a Shopping Mall”, 8. National Sociology Congress, METU.

AWARDS

1.METU Graduate Courses Performance Award (2018)

C. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu çalışma, eğitime, daha spesifik olarak sosyal dışlanma mekanları olarak okullara odaklanmaktadır ve eğitim eşitsizliklerinin, özellikle devlet okulları arasındaki farklılaşmanın neden var olduğunu ve devlet yatırımlarına rağmen kamu yetkilileri tarafından işaret edilen bir sorun olmaya devam ettiğini sorgulamaktadır. Bu soru üzerine araştırma, eğitim arzının yanı sıra talebe de bakmayı gerektirmiştir. Aynı zamanda, okulların eğitim arz ve talebinin coğrafi olarak karşılaştığı mekanlar olması bağlamında, devlet okulları arasındaki farklılaşma coğrafi bir meseledir. Tezde, okul farklılaşması kapsamında eğitim eşitsizliklerinin, bazı okulları sosyo-mekansal kapatmalar olarak şekillendiren aktörlerin dışlayıcı pratikleri tarafından üretildiği iddia edilmiştir. Bourdieu'nun alan teorisinin yardımıyla, eğitimin hem talep hem de arz tarafındaki aktörlerin karşılıklı pratikleri ile eğitim eşitsizliklerinin okul düzeyinde nasıl üretildiği ortaya konmuş ve sonunda geliştirilen kavram, “sosyo-mekansal kapatma” olmuştur. Bu, Ankara'nın iki ilçesinde (Çankaya ve Keçiören) bulunan iki farklı devlet orta okulunda yapılan saha araştırmasının ampirik bulgularına dayanarak tartışılmıştır.

Eğitimin toplumsal eşitsizliklerin azalmasına katkıda bulunup bulunmadığı veya toplumsal eşitsizlikleri derinleştirdiği uzun süreli bir tartışma konusudur ve farklı yaklaşımların bu konuda farklı görüşleri vardır. Liberal yaklaşım eğitimi toplumsal konumların adil dağılımını sağlamanın bir aracı olarak görürken, eleştirel bakış açısıyla yeniden üretimci yaklaşım, eğitim sistemlerinin mevcut toplumsal eşitsizlikleri yeniden ürettiğini iddia eder. Bu iki zıt görüşü oluşturan önemli farklılık, ilkinin eğitimi toplumsal eşitsizlikler ve farklılıklara tarafsız olarak ele alırken, ikincisinin eğitime içkin yapı ve süreçleri dikkate alıp bunu makro toplumsal yapı ve süreçlerle ilişkilendirmesidir. Liberal yaklaşıma göre eğitim, kaynakların liyakat esasına göre dağılımını sağladığı için sosyal hareketliliği destekler ve bu nedenle yaygınlaşması, nihayetinde toplumsal eşitsizliklerin azalmasına katkıda bulunur.

Son yıllarda hem gelişmekte olan hem de gelişmiş ülkelerde eğitimin yaygınlaşması oldukça dikkat çekicidir; daha uzun yıllar eğitime olan talep tüm dünyada hızla artmıştır. Türkiye’de de benzer bir eğilim söz konusudur; özellikle son yirmi yılda ilkokul ve orta okul düzeyi başta olmak üzere okullaşma oranlarındaki artış çarpıcıdır. Bu gelişmenin arkasında, hükümetin eğitimde fırsat eşitliğini sağlamak amacıyla eğitime katılımı artırma çabalarının etkisi yadsınamaz. Özellikle ulusal planlama belgelerinde ve raporlarda, eğitimin toplumsal hareketliliği sağlayıcı rolüne inanç açık şekilde göze çarpmaktadır. Buna rağmen, aynı belge ve raporlarda Türkiye’de çocukların eriştikleri eğitimin kalitesinin ailelerinin sosyo-ekonomik durumlarına oldukça bağlı olduğu da göze çarpan bir durumdur. Pek çok ulusal ve uluslararası raporda ortaya konduğu üzere, Türkiye’de okullar akademik başarı ve ailelerin sosyo-ekonomik statüsüne göre ayrılmış durumdadır. Bu durum, eğitimin toplumsal eşitsizlikler karşısında tarafsız olmadığını ve toplumsal eşitsizliklerle eğitim arasındaki ilişkinin eğitim sisteminin yapısını da dikkate alması gerektiğini kanıtlar niteliktedir. Bundan yola çıkarak, çalışmada okul düzeyinde aktörlerin karşılıklı pratikleriyle eğitim eşitsizliklerinin üretilmesine odaklanılırken eğitim sisteminin eşitsizlik yaratan yapısı da dikkate alınmış ve aktörlerin pratikleriyle ilişkili olarak ortaya konmaya çalışılmıştır.

Türkiye’de kısıtlı arza karşın eğitime olan yüksek talep karşısında benimsenen iki çözüm olduğu söylenebilir. Birincisi, okullara erişimin sınav gibi rekabetçi araçlarla kısıtlanması, ikincisi ise yetersiz kamu yatırımları karşısında eğitim arzını artırmak için özel yatırımların ve okulların desteklenmesidir. İlki özellikle akademik başarı ve prestij açısından okullar arası hiyerarşik bir şekilde farklılaşmaya yol açmaktadır. İki çözüm birlikte değerlendirildiğinde; özellikle varlıklı aileler çocuklarını özel okullara gönderirken, kamu eğitim sistemi içinde çeşitli nedenlerle hareket etmek durumunda olan pek çok aile, kaliteli eğitime erişmek için çeşitli stratejiler benimsemektedir. Bu konuda özellikle Ankara gibi büyük şehirlerde yaygınlığıyla en göze çarpan, ailelerin okul servisleri aracılığıyla günlük mekânsal hareketlilikleri yoluyla prestijli okullara/kaliteli eğitime erişime çabalarıdır. Bu durum, eğitime yüklenen toplumsal hareketliliği sağlama işlevinin mekânsal hareketlilikten bağımsız olmadığını

göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla, eğitim ve toplumsal eşitsizlikler arasındaki ilişkide eğitim sistemi olduğu kadar eğitim sisteminin mekansallığı da önemlidir.

Bu bağlamda tez, Ankara ailelerin çocuklarını nispeten başarılı/prestijli devlet okullarına göndererek daha kaliteli eğitim almalarına yönelik sosyo-mekansal stratejilerine odaklanmaktadır. Türkiye'deki devlet okul yerleştirme sisteminin ikamet adresine dayalı olduğu göz önüne alındığında, okul servis araçlarının yoğunluğu, eğitimin arz ve talep tarafları arasında mekansal bir uyumsuzluğa ve eğitim hizmetinin eşitsiz coğrafi dağılımına işaret etmektedir. Bazı devlet okullarının diğerlerinden nasıl farklılaştığı ve veliler arasında popüler hale geldiği, velilerin çocuklarını (zorunlu) mahalle okulu yerine neden uzaktaki devlet okullarına gönderdikleri, Türkiye'de devlet merkezli eğitim sistemi karşısında velilerin pozisyon almasında rol oynayan sosyo-mekansal dinamiklerin sorgulanması için çalışmanın sorduğu temel araştırma sorularıdır.

Tez, ilgili literatürde ağırlıklı olarak sosyolojik bir bakış açısıyla eğitimin talep yönüne odaklanan mevcut çalışmalardan farklı olarak, kamu politikası perspektifinden eğitimin arz yönünü de eşit şekilde kapsamayı amaçlar ve araştırma için eğitimin arz ve talebinin mekânsal olarak bulunduğu okullara odaklanır. Eğitim eşitsizliklerinin yaratılmasında Türkiye'deki eğitim sisteminin kendine has özellikleri ile ailelerin eğitim pratikleri birbiriyle ilişkili olarak ele alınır.

Araştırmanın, basitçe ailelerin okul kararlarını etkileyen faktörler yerine, ailelerin kararlarını da kapsayacak şekilde okul farklılaşması sürecini ortaya koymak gibi bir amacı olması ve bunu ailelerin eşitsizlik yaratan eylemleri ile bu eylemlere yol açan yapısal eşitsizliklerin karşılıklı ilişkisini ortaya koyarak gerçekleştirme çabası dolayısıyla, çalışmada Bourdieu'nun, çalışmanın teorik çerçevesini de oluşturan alan teorisinde sunduğu metodolojik yaklaşımdan yararlanılmıştır. Özne ve yapı karşıtlığını reddeden Bourdieu'nun yaklaşımı, toplumsal gerçekliğin tümüyle anlaşılabilmesi için öznel ve yapısal yaklaşımların analizin iki uğrağı olması gerektiğine dayanır. Yaklaşımında, özne ve yapı arasındaki diyalektik ilişki, özne

spesifik yapı ve yapı spesifik eylem anlayışıyla sağlanarak yapı soyut bir kavram olmaktan uzaklaşır. Teorik yaklaşımında alan temelli yapı anlayışı da bunun için önemlidir.

Alan teorisinin sunduğu yapı anlayışı, velilerin pratikleri ve bu pratiklere yön veren yapısal eşitsizlikleri ilişkili ele almak için oldukça uygun olduğu için benimsemiştir. Buna ek olarak, özne ve yapı ilişkisine mekanın entegre edilmesi için de yine Bourdieu'nun toplumsal mekan ve fiziksel mekan arasındaki ilişkiye dair sunduğu yaklaşımdan yararlanılmıştır. Buna göre, öznelerin ya da kurumların sosyal konumlarının net ortaya konulabilmesi için sosyal mekan gibi hiyerarşik bir yapıya sahip olan fiziksel mekandaki konumlarının dikkate alınması, yani fiziksel mekandaki konumlarıyla toplumsal konumlarının entegre edilmesi gerekir. Buna dayanarak, tezde eğitim eşitsizliklerinin mekansallığı, hem yapısal eşitsizliklere içkin hem de öznelerin eylem ve stratejilerine yön verici olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır.

Tezde mekânsal bağlam ve yapı arasındaki ilişkiye özel olarak odaklanması, okul farklılaşması olgusunun aktörlerin eylemleri ile yapısal eşitsizlikler arasındaki etkileşimin ifadesi olduğu gerçeğinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Aktörlerin eylemleri, okul farklılaşması bağlamında eğitimsel eşitsizlikler yaratır, ancak bu eylemler, güçlü bir mekansal ve aynı zamanda kurumsal temeli olan yapısal eşitsizliklerle ilişkili olarak üretilir. Bu anlamda, mekânsal bağlam, “popüler” okulları oluşturan nesnel yapıya içkin olduğu gibi, öznel anlam aracılığıyla failerin eylemlerine de içkindir. Araştırma sorusunu yanıtlamak için (bazı devlet okulları diğerleri arasında nasıl farklılaşır ve popüler hale gelir?), araştırma, yapısal eşitsizlikler ve aktörlerin eylemleri arasındaki bu etkileşimi ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlar. Coğrafyanın aktörlerin eylemlerini nasıl şekillendirdiğini, yapısal mekanizmaların mekânsal olarak spesifik bir şekilde eylemi nasıl ürettiğine ulaşmak için de araştırma, karşılaştırmalı örnek çalışmasına dayanır.

Dolayısıyla, alan araştırması için, karşılaştırma yapabilmeye yönelik iki örnek okul seçilmiş ve örnek seçimi için mekânsal bağlam dikkate alınmıştır. Eğitim eşitsizliklerinin mekansallığına ilişkin literatürde eksikliği tespit edildiği için arz (eğitim yatırımları) tarafındaki eşitsizliklerin coğrafi dağılımı ile talep (sosyal

kompozisyon) tarafındaki eşitsizliklerin dağılımı, coğrafi bağlamları belirlerken dikkate alınmıştır. Buna göre, örnek okul seçimi için Ankara'da ilçelere göre kamu eğitim yatırımlarının dağılımı ve toplumsal kompozisyonun dağılımı dikkate alınarak iki ilçe (Çankaya ve Keçiören) seçilmiştir. Daha sonra Ankara'da İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü'ne yapılan ziyaretten sonra bu iki ilçede yer alan birer orta okul seçilmiştir.

Bourdieu'nün alan teorisi ve eğitim ile toplumsal eşitsizlikler arasındaki ilişkiye yönelik yeniden üretimci yaklaşımı, aktörlere odaklanırken kurumsal bağlamı dikkate almayı gerektirir. Bunun için okula odaklanılırken, eğitimin arz tarafının aktörler olarak okul müdürleri, müdür yardımcıları ve öğretmenler, talep tarafının aktörleri olarak da veliler araştırmaya dahil edilmiştir. Bourdieu'nün metodolojik yaklaşımının özünde yer alan ilişkiler vurgusu, toplumsal ilişkilerin analizin merkezine yerleştirilmesine neden olduğundan, aktörleri, onların eylemlerini ve algılarını incelerken aralarındaki ilişkilere odaklanılmıştır. Okul müdürleri ile veliler arasındaki ilişkinin analizi, okul müdürlerini, velilerin okula erişimi üzerinde önemli bir kontrole sahip aktörler olarak “bekçi/gatekeeper” olarak ele alınmasına yol açarken, veliler arasındaki ilişkiler, diğerlerinden kendilerini ayırıştırma çabalarına dayanarak stratejilerini sorgulamaya yönelmiştir.

Çalışmada, okul farklılaşması/popüler devlet okullarının oluşumu bağlamında eğitim eşitsizliklerinin çok katmanlı olduğu ve bu nedenle de çok düzeyli bir analiz gerektirdiği savunulmuştur. Bunun için de ailelerin eylemleri ve stratejileri hem organizasyonel hem de kurumsal bağlamla ilişkili olarak analiz edilmiştir. Bu düzeyleri ilişkilendiren analitik çerçeve; dışlama, erişim ve sosyo-mekansal kapatma kavramlarıyla sağlanmıştır.

Öncelikle, velilerin okul kararlarına ve motivasyonlarına odaklanarak, okul kararlarının toplumsal kaygılarla ayrıcalık arayışlarının bir ürünü olması bağlamında, diğer velilerle ilişkiselliği vurgulanmıştır. Dışlama, bu ilişkiselliği kavramlaştıran anahtar terimdir, çünkü ayrıcalık arayışları daha güçsüz konumdaki ailelerin dışlanmasına dayanır. Dışlama, kaynakların eşitsiz dağılımı bağlamında eğitimin eşitsiz yapısını da ifade eder ve aktörlerin pratiklerini açıklarken yapısal

eşitsizliklerin de dikkate alınmasına olanak tanır. Bu anlamda eğitim arz ve talebini birbirine bağlar ve okul farklılaşması bağlamındaki eğitim eşitsizliklerinin sadece veliler arasındaki ilişkiyel eylemlerden değil, aynı zamanda eğitim sistemi ve politikalarının yarattığı eşitsiz yapı ile ilişkilerinden de kaynaklandığının iddia edilmesine izin verir.

Eğitim kaynaklarının eşitsiz coğrafi dağılımı bağlamında, okul farklılaşmasının coğrafi bağlamına yerleştirilmesi gerektiği iddia edilmektedir. Bu noktada erişim, anahtar kavram olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır; eğitimin arz ve talebinin eşitsiz coğrafi dağılımı bağlamında yapısal eşitsizlikleri mekânsal olarak aktörlerin strateji ve pratiklerine bağlar, aynı zamanda toplumsal dışlanmaya mekânsal boyut kazandırır. Bu şekilde erişim kavramıyla devletin ve eğitim politikalarının yarattığı mekânsal eşitsizlikler de analize dahil edilmiş olur.

Eğitim kaynaklarının dağılımı çerçevesinde eğitimin arz tarafının hem dışlama hem de erişim kavramlarına entegre edilmesiyle ulaşılan kavram ise sosyo-mekansal kapatmadır. Sosyal kapatma kavramı, aktörlerin kendilerinden daha güçsüz konumda olanları dışlamalarına dayanan kaynaklara erişim amacıyla gerçekleştirdikleri rekabetçi eylemlerini ifade eder. Sosyo-mekansal kapatma kavramı ise, aktörlerin rekabetçi eylemlerinin eğitim alanının yapısal eşitsizlikleriyle ilişkiselliği, ayrıca hem yapısal eşitsizliklerin hem de aktörlerin stratejilerinin mekânsallığı temelinde geliştirilmiştir. Bu şekilde sosyo-mekansal kapatma kavramı ile, kent mekanında eşitsiz dağılmış eğitim kaynaklarına erişmek için velilerin rekabetçi eylemlerine dayanan ve güçsüz konumda bulunanları sosyo-mekansal olarak dışlayan stratejilerin açıklanması amaçlanmıştır.

Tezin teorik çerçevesi, Bourdieu'nun alan teorisinden yararlanılmış ve okul seçimi literatürü ile alan araştırmasının bulguları ışığında oluşturulmuştur. Alan teorisinden hareketle öncelikle okul seçimini aşağıdan yukarıya bir süreç olarak tartışmaya olanak sağlayacak şekilde, velilerin okul kararları ve motivasyonlarına odaklanılır. Velilerin okul kararlarını, kendilerini diğer velilerden ayırıştırma motivasyonu, ağırlıklı olarak toplumsal kaygılarla almaları, okul kararlarını dışlayıcı stratejiler olarak görmemizi sağlar. Bu, farklı sınıfların eğitim pratiklerinin ilişkiselliğini açığa

çıkartır ve bizi, farklı sınıfların ilişkisel eylemleri yoluyla eğitim eşitsizliklerinin yaratılmasına ilişkin alanın oluşumuna götürür. Daha sonra, temel kaynakların eşitsiz dağılımı olan

Bourdieu'nün eşitsizlik yaklaşımından yola çıkarak, eğitim kaynaklarının dağıtımındaki rolü dolayısıyla devlet politikalarına odaklanılır ve okul seçimi bir politika sorunu olarak tartışılır. Bu şekilde eğitim alanındaki ilişkisellik sadece veliler arası değil, veliler ve eğitimin kurumsal bağlamı arasında da görüldüğünün altı çizilir.

Eğitimin arz ve talep taraflarını karşılıklı olarak eşitsizliklerin araştırılmasında dikkate alınmasına neden olan bu yaklaşım, aynı zamanda arz tarafı aktörleri olarak okul müdürleri ve öğretmenlere odaklanarak, veliler ile aralarındaki ilişkinin incelenmesini gerektirir. Yani, okulları kurumsal bağlamına yerleştirmeyi gerektirir.

Bourdieu'nün, yapının daha bağlama özgü bir açıklamasını geliştirmeye olanak tanıyan, coğrafi alan ile toplumsal alanı bütünleştirme önerisi, aktörlerin coğrafi dağılımını kaynakların coğrafi dağılımına göre değerlendirmeyi gerektirdiğinden hem kaynakların coğrafi dağılımına hem de aktörlerin coğrafi dağılımına birbirleriyle ilişkili olarak odaklanılır. Bu şekilde eğitim alanının coğrafi bağlamı hem eğitim arzının hem de eğitim talebinin eşitsiz coğrafi dağılımının ortaya konulmasına dayanır.

Okul seçimi kaynaklı eğitimsel eşitsizlikleri ele alan çalışmalarda, ailelerin özellikle de orta sınıf ailelerin eylemlerine ve seçimlerine eğitim eşitsizliklerinin açıklanmasında fazlaca önem atfedildiği görülmüştür. Yani, ilgili yazında eğitimin talep tarafına odaklanan çalışmaların baskın olduğu söylenebilir. Buna göre, eğitim alanında ayrıcalıklı konumda bulunan orta sınıflar, çocuklarının sosyal pozisyonlarını korumak için alt sınıfların dışlanmasına dayanan okul tercihleri ve eğitim stratejileriyle ayrılmış okullar yaratırlar. Öte yandan, eğitim politikalarının ve eğitim kurumlarının ailelerin tercihlerinden bağımsız olmadığını, ailelerin stratejilerini şekillendiren önemli etkenler olduğunu ortaya koyan daha az sayıdaki çalışmada ise, eğitimin arz tarafının da eşitsizliklerin üretiminde dikkate alınması gerektiğine işaret eder. Ancak, çalışmaların önemli bir kısmı, ailelerin seçimlerinin

kurumsal bağlamına okul seçimi üzerine yasal düzenlemeler kapsamında, okul yerleştirme sistemlerinin ailelere seçim hakkı tanıyıp tanımaması odaklı yaklaşır. Buna karşılık okul seçimi üzerine farklı yasal düzenlemelere sahip ülke karşılaştırmalarına dayanan pek çok çalışmada, orta sınıfların okul seçimi ve eğitim pratiklerinin benzer olması, politika bağlamından bağımsız olarak okul farklılaşmasının sınıfsal saiklerle aşağıdan yukarıya üretildiğinin iddia edilmesine neden olur.

Buna karşılık tezde öne sürülen, kurumsal bağlamın sadece okul yerleştirme sistemi ve yasal düzenlemelerle okul tercihinin izin verilip verilmemesi meselesiyle sınırlı ele alınmaması gerektiğidir. Dolayısıyla, tezde eğitimin arz tarafının kapsamını genişletmek amacıyla kurumsal bağlamın analizi, 1) Türkiye’de eğitim sisteminin eşitsizlik yaratan temel yapısal özellikleri; 2) Eğitim hizmeti sunumunun organizasyonel tasarımı; 3) Eğitim sisteminin mekânsallığı.

İlk olarak, Türkiye’de eğitim sistemini yarattığı yapısal eşitsizlikler bağlamında sorguladığımızda ilk araştırılması gereken konu eğitim kaynaklarının dağılımından kaynaklanan eşitsizliklerdir. Bu anlamda tezin iddiası, Türkiye’de sınırlı ve eşit olmayan eğitim kaynaklarının oluşturduğu eğitim yapısı, okul seçiciliği ve okul hiyerarşisi yaratarak eğitim sistemine rekabetçi karakterini vermektedir. Sınırlı ve eşitsiz dağıtılan kamu eğitim kaynakları, bir yandan özel yatırım ve harcamaların devlet tarafından desteklenmesi, diğer yandan okul seçiciliğine ve okul hiyerarşisine neden olan okullara erişimin kısıtlanması ihtiyacını doğurmaktadır. Bu şekilde okullar arası rekabet ve hiyerarşik farklılaşmayı pekiştirerek eşitsizlik yaratmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, rekabetçilik ve okullar arası hiyerarşik farklılaşma, sistemin eşitsizlik yaratan yapısal özellikleridir. Türkiye’de eğitim sisteminin sınav merkezliliği ise rekabetin görünen yüzü olarak kaynakların kısıtlılığında ileri gelen rekabeti yeniden üretmektedir. Dolayısıyla, orta okul düzeyinde okullara erişim/yerleşme sınava bağlı olmasa bile, asıl nedeni kamu kaynaklarının kısıtlılığı olan rekabet, orta okul ve hatta ilkokul düzeyinde de kaliteli eğitime erişimi belirleyen temel mekanizmadır. Son yıllarda liselere giriş sisteminde gerçekleştirilen değişiklikler, rekabeti azaltmayı ve okullar arası kalite farklılıklarını gidermeyi amaçlasa da eğitim arzının artırılması yönünde bir değişiklik olmadığı ve hatta tam tersi etkiye sahip düzenlemelerle

birlikte kaliteli eğitime ve prestijli okullara erişimin, özellikle kamusal eğitim sektörü içinde yer alan orta sınıflar için daha rekabetçi hale geldiği ortaya konmuştur.

İkinci olarak, bu eşitsiz ve rekabetçi yapıda faaliyet gösteren ve eğitim hizmeti sunan örgütler olarak okulların eğitim politikaları ve reformlarının uygulanmasındaki otonomilerine odaklanılmıştır. Bu noktada, Türkiye’de oldukça merkezi olan eğitim örgütlenmesi içinde okulların politika yapımı ve uygulanmasında neredeyse hiç otonomisi olmamasına rağmen, okul müdürlerinin okulların günlük işleyişinde zımni karar vericiler olduğu iddia edilmiştir. Okul müdürlerinin uygulamadaki bu otoriteleri, yukarıdan aşağıya dizayn edilen politikalar ve aşağıdaki/pratikteki sorunlar arasındaki farkın Türkiye’de oldukça açık olmasından kaynaklanmaktadır. Tasarlananlarla gerçek günlük problemler arasındaki uçurum, okul müdürlerinin kararlarını, uygulamalarını ve algılarını okulların işleyişinin asıl belirleyicileri yapmaktadır. Okul müdürlerinin otonomilerinin araştırılacağı önemli bir mesele okul finansmanıdır. Özellikle 2000’li yılların başından itibaren okul temelli yönetim ve bunun uzantısı olarak okul temelli bütçe, okulların eğitim finansmanının okul düzeyinde sağlanmasını ve okulların kendi finansal kaynaklarını yaratmalarını öngörmektedir. Bu da okulların finansal kaynak konusunda özellikle velilerin yaptıkları katkılara bağlı hale getirmektedir. Yasal düzenlemeler velilerin bağış adı altında finansal katkılarını zorunlu kılmadığından, okulların kaynak bulması, özellikle müdürlerin çeşitli becerilerine ve kaynak yaratma kabiliyetlerine bağlıdır.

Üçüncü olarak, kurumsal bağlamı analiz ederken eğitim sisteminin mekansallığına odaklanılmasının sebebi, eğitime aktarılan kısıtlı kamu kaynakları nedeniyle Türkiye’de eğitim sisteminin yapısal olarak ürettiği rekabet ve eşitsizliğin kaynakların eşitsiz coğrafi dağılımı dolayısıyla mekânsal olarak da tetiklendiğini ortaya koymaktır. Bu konuda öncelikle, Türkiye’de eğitim alanındaki bölgesel eşitsizliklere odaklanılmış ve ulusal düzeyde eğitim hizmetinin ve akademik başarının eşitsiz dağıldığı, bölgeler arası farklılıklar üzerinden tartışılmıştır. Okullaşma oranları, akademik başarı ve eğitim hizmetinin kalitesi ile yeterliliğine yönelik verilerin eşitsiz dağılımı, Türkiye’de eğitim alanında mekânsal eşitsizliklerin eğitim eşitsizliklerinin önemli bir boyutu oluşturduğunu göstermektedir. Bundan

yola çıkararak, kent ölçeğinde eğitim hizmet ve kaynaklarının coğrafi dağılımı da eğitim eşitsizlikleri araştırılırken dikkate alınması gereken bir mesele olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, eğitim hizmetinin farklılaşmasını ve eğitimdeki eşitsizlikleri kent ölçeğinde araştıran son dönem çalışmalar göstermektedir ki, eğitim arzı özellikle kentin varlıklı ve yoksul bölgelerinde farklılık göstermektedir. Ancak, bu çalışmaların özellikle karşılaştırmalı analiz için kentin varlıklı ve yoksul bölgelerini ele almalarının arkasında, talep odaklı bir eşitsizlik anlayışı yattığı vurgulanmıştır. Buna karşılık tezin eğitim eşitsizliklerinin mekansallığına yönelik yaklaşımının ailelerin sosyo-ekonomik düzeyi kadar eğitim yatırımlarının dağılımı bağlamında eğitim arzını da dikkate alarak geliştirildiğinin altı çizilmiştir.

İlgili literatürde eğitim eşitsizliklerinin mekansallığı, okul seçimi kaynaklı eğitimsel eşitsizlikleri ele alan çalışmalarda olduğu gibi eğitimin talep tarafına odaklı bir şekilde ele alınır. Buna göre, ailelerin sınıfsal pozisyonlarına bağlı olarak değişen okul tercihleri, hem sosyo-mekansal ayrışmayı beslemekte hem de ondan beslenmektedir. Eğitim eşitsizliklerinin mekansallığı demografik süreçleri ifade etmektedir. Yaygın olarak ele alınan tablo şu şekildedir: Veliler, özellikle de orta sınıf veliler başarılı okulların olduğu mahalleleri tercih ederler, orta sınıfların bu mahallelerde yoğunlaşması okulların başarısını artırır ve bu mahallelere olan talep okullara olan taleple birlikte yükseldiğinden, konut fiyatları ve kiralar artar. Bir tür kısır döngü eşliğinde okul farklılaşması ve sosyo-mekansal ayrışma birbirini beslemesiyle “mahalle etkisi” ve “okul etkisi” de birbirini beslemektedir. Bu çalışmalarda gözden kaçan şey, eğitim arzının coğrafi dağılımının yol açtığı mekansal eşitsizlik, daha doğrusu eğitim arzının eşitsiz coğrafi dağılımıdır. Bu çalışmalardaki eğitim hizmeti sunumu ve kalitesindeki farklılık sosyal kompozisyon farklılıklarına karşılık geldiği için bu göz ardı edilmektedir. Buna karşılık tezde, okul farklılaşmasını yaratan ailelerin stratejileri sosyo-mekansal kapatma olarak ele alınarak, hem ailelerin stratejilerinin sosyal dışlayıcılığı vurgulanmış hem de kaynaklara erişim amacıyla gerçekleştirdikleri rekabetçi eylemlerinin kaynakların coğrafi olarak eşitsiz dağılımı dolayısıyla ailelerin stratejilerinde bağımsız bir mekansal eşitsizlik anlayışı sunulmuştur. Dolayısıyla okul farklılaşması, ailelerin ilişkisel stratejilerine indirgenemeyeceği gibi, mekansallığı da sosyal kompozisyondan kaynaklanan farklılıklara indirgenemez.

Okul seçimine ilişkin hareket alanının yasal olarak devlet merkezli bir eğitim sistemi tarafından kısıtlandığı Türkiye'de, okula yerleştirme sisteminin adrese dayalı olmasına rağmen mahalle ile eğitim arasındaki bağlantı zayıftır. Mahalle seçmek daha kaliteli eğitime erişimin garantisi değildir. Dolayısıyla Türkiye'de daha okul merkezli bir süreç söz konusudur. Güçlü sosyal kaygılara sahip olmalarına rağmen ailelerin “enformel” seçimi okul odaklıdır. Bu, okulları velilerin sosyal kapatma stratejilerinin hedefi haline getirir. Mahalleler beklentilerini karşılama garantisi vermediğinden, sosyal kapatma konusunda hem mekansal erişim hem de okulların ayrıcalıklı mekanlar olarak oluşumu, okul içi dinamikleri oluşturan bir mücadele ve müzakere konusu haline gelmektedir. Bu aynı zamanda, okulları, belirli sosyal grupların yoğunlaştığı yerler olarak değil, eğitim arzının eşit olmayan bir şekilde dağıldığı coğrafyada faaliyet gösteren eğitim hizmeti sunan örgütler olarak ele alma ihtiyacını da ortaya koymaktadır. Bu anlamda, popüler okulların durumu, eğitimdeki eşitsizliklerin mekansallığına ilişkin literatürde yaygın olarak ele alınan sosyo-mekansal ayrışma ile okul farklılaşması arasındaki ilişkinin ötesine geçilmesini zorunlu kılmaktadır.

Tüm bu değerlendirmeler eşliğinde, tezde sunulan mekânsal yaklaşım, devletin eğitim yatırımları bağlamında eğitim arzının coğrafi dağılımını, ailelerin sosyo-ekonomik seviyeleri bağlamında talebin coğrafi dağılımıyla birlikte dikkate alınmasına dayanmaktadır ve çalışmanın mekânsal bağlamının belirlenmesi ve analizi için kullanılmıştır. Buna göre, öncelikle kentsel bağlamı oluşturan Ankara'da, kurumsal bağlamdan gelen kısıtlı kamu kaynaklarına dayanan rekabet meselesi irdelenmiştir. Öncelikle, Ankara'nın seçilmesinin nedeni, hem eğitim eşitsizliklerinin ulusal ölçekte dağılımında ortalamaı temsil etmesi, hem de büyükşehir olmasından dolayı, daha çok kentsel bir olgu olan eğitimin arz ve talebi arasındaki mekânsal uyumsuzluğun araştırılması için uygun bir şehir olmasıdır.

Eğitime aktarılan kısıtlı kamu kaynaklarından ileri gelen rekabetin Ankara için sorgulanması için, son on yıla ait özel ve devlet okulu sayıları karşılaştırmalı olarak analiz edilmiştir. Ankara'da son on yılda devlet ve özel ortaokul sayıları incelendiğinde, özel ortaokul sayısının devlet okullarının sayısından çok daha fazla

arttığı açıkça görülmektedir. Resmi ve özel ortaokulların artış oranları arasındaki fark oldukça dikkat çekicidir; son on yılda devlet ortaokullarının sayısı %12 artarken, özel okulların sayısı %216 artmıştır. Bu durum, kaliteli eğitime olan talep giderek artarken kamu yatırımlarının bu talebi karşılamak konusunda artan bir şekilde yetersiz kaldığını göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla, kurumsal bağlamda Türkiye’de eğitim sisteminin yetersiz kaynaklar temelinde gelişen rekabetçi yapısı, Ankara bağlamında son on yıllık dönemde ortaya konmuştur. Bu, özellikle son dönemde, kamu yatırımları miktarının şehirde neredeyse sabit olması bağlamında, özellikle kaliteli eğitim arayışındaki orta sınıf aileler için prestijli/kaliteli devlet okuluna erişimin giderek zorlaşması anlamına gelmektedir.

Ankara geneli için kamu ve özel eğitim yatırımlarına dayanarak analiz edilen rekabetin, il ölçeğinde coğrafi dağılımının analizi için ilçe istatistikleri kullanılmıştır. Öncelikle, kaliteli ve daha iyi eğitime olan talebin il genelinde nasıl dağıldığına bakmak için, Ankara’nın 25 ilçesi için özel okul sayıları üzerinden özel eğitim yatırımlarının durumu analiz edilmiş ve talebin ilçeler arası dağılımı ortaya konmuştur. Bunun sonucunda, özel eğitim yatırımlarının Ankara’nın belirli ilçelerinde yoğunlaştığı görülmüştür. Toplam orta okul sayısı içinde özel okul oranının en yüksek olduğu ilçeler olan Çankaya, Etimesgut, Gölbaşı, Keçiören ve Yenimahalle özel okulların yoğunlaştığı ilçelerdir. Bunlar içinde özellikle Çankaya ve Etimesgut ilçelerinde özel okulların sayısı toplam okul sayısının yarısından fazlasını oluşturmaktadır. Bu beş ilçe, daha kaliteli eğitim talebinin daha rahat bulunabileceği ilçeler olmaları nedeniyle örnek seçimi için öne çıkan ilçeler olmuştur.

Daha iyi eğitim talebi karşısında kamusal eğitim arzının durumunun mekânsal dağılımını analiz etmek, yani arz ve talep arasındaki mekânsal uyumu ve uyumsuzluğu Ankara ölçeğinde araştırmak için, kamu eğitim yatırımlarının il genelinde coğrafi dağılımı, yine ilçe istatistikleri üzerinden analiz edilmiştir. Bunun için, 25 ilçe için okul başına düşen öğrenci, sınıf başına düşen öğrenci ve öğretmen başına düşen öğrenci sayıları analiz edilmiş ve devletin eğitim yatırımlarının

yeterliliđi ve eğitim hizmetinin kalitesinin cođrafi dađılımı ortaya konmuştur. Yapılan analizin sonucunda kamu eğitim yatırımlarının Ankara genelinde eşitsiz dađıldığı görülmüştür:

Kamu eğitim yatırımları ve eğitim kalitesinin tüm temel göstergelerine göre Keçiören, Mamak, Pursaklar, Sincan ve Altındađ, kamu eğitim yatırımları ve eğitim kalitesi açısından en dezavantajlı olan, kamu eğitim yatırımlarının en yetersiz olduđu ilçelerdir. Yetersiz kamu eğitim yatırımları özellikle Ankara'nın merkez ilçelerinde yoğunlaşmış olup, istisna Çankaya ve Gölbaşı'dır. Çankaya ve Gölbaşı, kamu eğitim kaynaklarının en fazla yönlendirildiđi ilçelerdir.

Araştırma için örnek okul seçimine yönelik ilçe seçimi için kamu eğitim yatırımlarının bu dađılımı, daha kaliteli eğitim talebinin ilçelere göre dađılımı ile birlikte değerlendirilmiş ve örnek okul seçimi için Çankaya ile Keçiören ilçeleri tespit edilmiştir. Bu iki ilçe de kaliteli eğitim talebinin yüksek olduđu ilçeler olmakla birlikte, Çankaya'da kamu eğitim arzı bu taleple uyumluyken, Keçiören'de eğitim arzı var olan talep karşısında yetersizdir. Dolayısıyla bu iki ilçe, velilerin rekabete dayalı eylemlerini ve kaliteli eğitime erişim stratejilerini karşılaştırmalı olarak cođrafi bağlama yerleştirmek için uygun ilçeler olarak belirlenmiştir. Örnek okul seçimi için ise, velilerin araştırmaya konu olan rekabetçi erişim stratejilerinin yöneldiđi devlet orta okullarına odaklanılmış ve Çankaya ile Keçiören'de yer alan iki okul seçilmiştir. Bu okullardan Çankaya'da yer alan Okul A, Bilim ve Sanat Merkezi (BİLSEM) olarak kurulması ve Keçiören'de yer alan Okul B, Bakanlık tarafından birden çok kez çeşitli uygulamalarda pilot okul olarak seçilmiş olması nedeniyle kamu yatırımlarının yönelmesi bağlamında diđer devlet okullarından farklılaşan okullardır. Aynı zamanda, tam da bu nedenle kazandıkları prestij nedeniyle ailelerin kaliteli eğitim hizmeti arayışlarının da hedefinde yer almaktadırlar.

Okul farklılaşması/popüler okulların oluşumu, eşitsiz eğitim yapısı üzerine velilerin eylemlerinin daha fazla eşitsizlik yaratmasını ifade ederken, aynı zamanda kamusal eğitim kaynaklarının eşitsiz cođrafi dađılımından kaynaklanan mekânsal eşitsizliklerin yeni bir katmana taşınmasını ifade etmektedir. Diđer bir deyişle, popüler okullar, eğitim kaynaklarının eşitsiz dađılımının yol açtığı mevcut mekânsal

eşitsizliklerin yeniden tercüme edilmesi yoluyla mekânsal olarak okul hiyerarşisinin oluşturulmasını da ifade etmektedir. Bu doğrultuda, tezde eğitim Ankara bağlamında okul alanının mekânsal eşitsizlikleri iki katmanlı bir çerçevede analiz edilmiş ve sunulmuştur. Birincisi, eğitim kaynaklarının eşitsiz coğrafi dağılımı yoluyla devletin oluşturduğu, il çapındaki eğitim eşitsizlikleridir (ilçeler arası) ve devletin yatırım kararlarındaki yapısal eşitsizliklerin nasıl coğrafi bir biçim aldığını ortaya koymaktadır. İkincisi ise, ilçeler arası eşitsiz dağılmış eğitim kaynaklarıyla ilişkisel olarak velilerin, müdürlerin ve öğretmenlerin eylemleriyle yaratılan ilçe çapındaki eşitsizliklerdir (okullar arası) ve yapısal eşitsizliklerin sosyo-mekansal olarak okullar arası hiyerarşik farklılaşmaya nasıl çevrildiğini göstermektedir.

Bu çerçeve ile, velilerin kaliteli eğitime/prestijli okullara erişim amaçlı rekabetçi eylemlerinin eğitim arzının mekânsal dağılımıyla nasıl dolaymlandığını ortaya çıkarmak amaçlanmıştır. Ayrıca, örnek olarak seçilen iki “popüler” devlet orta okulu, eğitim arzının dağılımı açısından iki farklı ilçede yer aldığından, eğitim eşitsizliklerinin/okul farklılaşmasının sadece talebin coğrafi dağılımı bağlamında değil arzın da coğrafi dağılımı bağlamında nasıl mekânsal olarak spesifik bir şekilde üretildiğini de ortaya koymak amaçlanmıştır. Bu nedenle, velilerin rekabetçi eylemlerini coğrafi bağlamına yerleştirirken, sosyal konumları ile eğitim kaynaklarının coğrafi dağılımı karşısında mekânsal konumları entegre edilmiştir. Bu sayede eğitim alanının yapısının aktörler üzerinde mekansal olarak da nasıl eşitsiz işlediğini ve bunun eğitimsel eşitsizliklerin yaratılmasında nasıl bir fark yarattığını ortaya çıkarmak hedeflenmiştir. Ailelerin ve ayrıca okulların alandaki konumlarını belirlemek için Çankaya ve Keçiören’de eğitim düzeyi ve sosyo-ekonomik düzeyin coğrafi dağılımı analiz edilmiştir. Buna göre öncelikle, Çankaya ve Keçiören’deki nüfusun eğitim seviyesi ve sosyo-ekonomik düzey açısından farklı özellikte olduğu ortaya konmuştur; eğitim seviyesi ve sosyo-ekonomik düzey Çankaya’da çok daha yüksektir. İkinci olarak, sosyo-ekonomik düzeyin ilçe ölçeğinde coğrafi dağılımının analizi göstermiştir ki, Çankaya’da sosyo-ekonomik düzeyi yüksek grupların hakimiyeti net bir coğrafi ifadeye sahip olup, farklı toplumsal gruplar kendi içlerinde toplumsal bir homojenlik yaratacak şekilde daha geniş ölçekte ayrılmıştır. Keçiören’de ise toplumsal gruplar daha heterojen bir coğrafi dağılımla özdeşleşmiştir. Bu mekânsal analizlere dayanarak, Keçiören ve Çankaya ilçelerinin

eđitim eřitsizliklerinin mekânsal bileřenlerinden biri olan talebin cođrafi dađılımı bađlamında okullar için nasıl farklı cođrafi bađamlar oluřturduđu řu řekilde özetlenebilir:

Çankaya, ekonomik ve eđitimsel deđerlerin odak noktası olup, A Okulu'nun bulunduđu mahalle, bu deđerlerin belirli bir homojenlik oluřturacak řekilde ilçede yođunlařtıđı yerdir. Keçiören, ekonomik ve eđitimsel deđerler ađısından Çankaya'ya göre ikincil konumdadır. B Okulu'nun bulunduđu mahalle, sosyo-ekonomik düzeyi yüksek toplumsal grupların yařadıđı bir mahalle olsa da bu durum Keçiören'in ikincil konumu ve sosyo-ekonomik düzeyi düşük mahallelere olan görece yakınlıđı ile iliřkili olarak deđerlendirildiđinde Okul B'nin popöler okul olarak oluřumunda farklı dinamiklere neden olmaktadır. Öncelikle, iki okulda kayıt alanı dıřından gelen öđrencilerin oranı arasında önemli bir fark vardır. Okul A'da kayıt alanı dıřından gelen öđrencilerin oranı %68 iken, bu oran Okul B'de %34'tür. Ayrıca, okulların servis güzergahları karřılařtırıldıđında, Okul B'ye kayıt alanı dıřından gelen öđrencilerin neredeyse tamamının Keçiören'de yařadıđı ve okulun Kuzeyinde bulunan görece daha düşük gelirli toplumsal kesimlerin yařadıđı mahallelerden geldikleri görölmektedir. Okul A'ya kayıt alanı dıřından gelen öđrencilerin yařadıkları yerler ise Ankara'nın çok çeřitli ilçelerine yayılmıř durumdadır.

Bu farklı ilçelerde bulunan iki orta okulda gerçekleřtirilen alan arařtırmasında veri toplamak için müdürler, müdür yardımcıları, öđretmenler ve velilerle yarı yapılandırılmıř derinlemesine görüřmeler gerçekleřtirilmiřtir. İki okulda Aralık 2019 ve Aralık 2021 arasında gerçekleřtirilen toplam görüřme sayısı 59'dur. Bu görüřmeler, Covid-19 pandemisi nedeniyle yaklaşık bir buçuk yıl verilmek zorunda kalınan ara nedeniyle iki turda gerçekleřtirilmiřtir. İlk tur görüřmeler Aralık 2019 ve Mart 2020 döneminde, ikinci tur görüřmeler ise, Eylül 2021 ve Aralık 2021 arasında gerçekleřtirilmiřtir. Velilere yönelik oluřturulan soru setinde, mahallede yařayanlar, okul için mahalleye tařınanlar ve okul kayıt alanı dıřında yařayanlar için ayrı sorular da yer almıřtır. Velilerle yapılan görüřmelerin temel amacı, okullara, mahallelere iliřkin algılarını anlamak, mevcut okullara nasıl ve neden karar verdiklerini sorgulamak ve kendi mahallelerindeki okula neden çocuklarını göndermeyi reddettiklerini sorgulamaktı. Ayrıca, bu meseleler ile sosyo-ekonomik pozisyonları

arasında bağlantı kurmak da amaçlandı. Bu nedenle sorular hem nerede yaşadıkları, meslekleri, eğitim durumları gibi demografik soruları, hem de diğer velilere, mahallelere ve okullara bakış açılarını içeren soruları kapsamaktaydı. Benzer şekilde, öğretmenlerle yapılan görüşmeler hem veliler, mahalleler vb. hakkındaki algılarına hem de daha önce çalıştıkları okullardaki geçmiş deneyimlerine odaklandı. Veli ve öğrenci profili, okul yönetimi vb. açısından okulu daha önce görev yaptıkları okullarla karşılaştırmaları da istendi. Bu sorulara ek olarak okul müdürleri ve müdür yardımcılarıyla yapılan görüşmelerde kayıt dönemlerinde karşılaşılan sorunlar ve okul bütçesine yönelik sorular da yer aldı.

Araştırmanın bulgularına dayanarak ilk olarak belirtilmesi gereken, 2018 yılından itibaren liselere giriş sisteminin ağırlıklı olarak adrese dayalı hale getirilmesiyle veliler üzerinde çocuklarını “iyi” ortaokula gönderme baskısı artmış ve bu da kaliteli eğitime erişim için mekânsal hareketliliklerini beslemiştir. Ancak, velilerin okullar üzerine değerlendirmelerinde, sınav merkezli olmalarından dolayı akademik faktörler önemli yer tutarken, özellikle okulların sınavdaki başarılarını ve eğitimin kalitesini karşılaştırmalı olarak değerlendirmeye yönelik objektif bilgi mevcut olmadığından, iyi okul değerlendirmeleri, dolayısıyla okulların popülerliği öznel değerlendirmelere göre üretilmektedir. Bu konuda iki okulun da kamu yatırımlarının yönlendirilmesini temsil eden özel kuruluş öyküleri ya da çeşitli pilot uygulamalar için seçilmeleri, okulların velilerin gözünde başarılı okullar olarak görülmelerine neden olmaktadır. Popülerliği belirleyen bir diğer mesele de okulların bulunduğu mahallelerdir. Her ne kadar mahalle nüfusunun önemli bir bölümü bu okullarda okumasa da görece yüksek gelir gruplarına ev sahipliği yapmaları, velilerin gözünde başarılı okul algısını güçlendirmektedir.

İkinci olarak, velilerin mahallelerindeki okul yerine çocuklarını uzak mesafede bulunan bu okullara göndermeleri, daha iyi eğitim kaynaklarına erişmek için daha güçsüz konumda bulunanların dışlanmasına dayanan rekabetçi eylemler olarak, sosyal kapatma kavramıyla ele alınabilir. Ancak, velilerin motivasyonları ve erişim stratejileri, mevcut eğitim kaynaklarının mekânsal dağılımıyla ilişkili olarak yaşadıkları yer ve günlük mekânsal hareketlilikleri yoluyla erişebildikleri mekânsal

alana göre deęişiklik göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla, mekânsal kısıtlar velilerin stratejilerinin şekillenmesinde önemlidir.

Üçüncü olarak, okul müdürleri ve öğretmenler, erişimin yasal düzenlemelere göre sağlanmadığı bu okullarda mekânsal erişimin “enformel” kullarını belirleyen önemli aktörler olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, her ne kadar velilerin erişim stratejileri daha güçsüz pozisyonda bulunanları dışlayıcı olsa da velilerin stratejileri okul müdürleri ve öğretmenlerin dolayısıyla eşitsizlik yaratır. Bu da alan olarak okulların izlediği açık olmayan kurallara bağlı olarak belirlenir. Bu kuralların oluşmasında müdürler oldukça kritiktir. Müdürler, okulların kapasitesini aşan talebin mümkün kılmasıyla, pratikte hizmet sağlayacakları velileri seçme ve eleme yoluyla belirlenmesi konusunda yetkilidirler. Bunu bağış ya da ikamet adreslerinin doğruluğunun polisin araştırması için bildirilmesi gibi çeşitli mekanizmalar yoluyla gerçekleştirirler. Dolayısıyla, bu okullarda sosyal kapatma müdürler tarafından sağlanır. Pratikte okulların “enformel” seçiciliği, müdürlerin velilerin sosyo-ekonomik durumuna göre okulların sosyal kompozisyonunun oluşturulmasında önemli aktörler oldukları yorumunun yapılmasına izin vermektedir. Okulların bu “enformel” seçiciliği bağlamında sosyal dışlama, müdürlerin ve öğretmenlerin veliler ve öğrencilere yönelik algılarına oldukça bağlıdır. “Dışarıdakileri” ve “içeridekileri” belirlemede ve “dışarıdakilerin” dışlanmasında, velilerin geldikleri ilçelerin ya da mahallelerin sembolik temsili oldukça etkilidir. Bu bağlamda, sosyo-mekansal ayrımlar, özellikle müdürlerin ve öğretmenlerin temsilleri ile okul içi bölünmelere dönüşerek, sosyal kapatmayı garantiler. Buradan yola çıkarak, dışlanmanın mekânsal temsiller aracılığıyla mümkün olması dolayısıyla okulların sosyo-mekansal kapatmalar olarak sadece toplumsal değil, mekânsal dışlamayı da ifade ettikleri ortaya konmaktadır.

Dördüncü olarak, çalışmanın bulguları göstermiştir ki, “mahalle etkisi” ve “okul etkisi” aynı şeyler değildir ve bu okulların farklılaşmasını açıklamada yetersiz kalmaktadır. Diğer bir deyişle, bu okulların diğer devlet okullarından farklılaşarak popüler okullar olarak üretilmesi, mahallelerin sosyal kompozisyon etkisinin doğrudan bir sonucu değildir. Mahalle ve okul etkisi okullarda hem arz hem de talep tarafının aktörleri arasındaki müzakere ve mücadelelere tabidir, bu bağlamda da

okulların farklılaşması/eğitimsel eşitsizliklerin yaratılmasında okul içi dinamikler dolayısıyla etkilidirler. Örnek iki okul üzerinden yürütülen çalışma göstermiştir ki, sosyo-mekansal ayrışmanın doğrudan okul farklılaşması olarak yansması yerine karşılaşılan, sosyo-mekansal ayrışmanın okul müdürleri, öğretmenler ve velilerin stratejileri ve pratikleri üzerinden eğitim eşitsizliklerine tercümesidir.

Bu bağlamda çalışmanın temel iddiası, devlet okulları arasındaki farklılaşmanın veliler, müdürler ve öğretmenlerin ortak ürünü olduğudur. Ancak, toplumsal ve eğitim kaynaklarının dağılımı açısından, hiyerarşik olarak farklılaşmış kent mekânında farklı coğrafi pozisyonlarda bulunan bu iki okulda, eğitim eşitsizliklerinin sosyo-mekansal kapatma olarak üretilmesi farklı mekanizmaların öncülüğünde gerçekleşmektedir. Eğitim yatırımlarının, ayrıca sosyo-ekonomik ve eğitim düzeyi açısından talebin dağılımı bağlamında hiyerarşinin tepesinde bulunan Çankaya ilçesinde yer alan Okul A'da bu daha çok okul müdürünün öncülüğünde gerçekleşirken, hiyerarşide daha altta yer alan Keçiören'de konumlanan Okul B'de sosyo-mekansal kapatma daha ağırlıklı olarak velilerin öncülüğünde sağlanır.

Ayrıca, Okul A'nın popüler bir okul olarak üretilmesi, eğitim arz ve talebinin eşitsiz dağıldığı coğrafyadaki güçsüz pozisyonları il genelinde yeniden üretirken, Okul B ise ilçenin belirli mahallelerinde yaşayan velilerin güçsüz pozisyonlarını güçlendirerek ilçe genelinde eğitim eşitsizliklerinin yaratılmasını ifade etmektedir. Mevcut toplumsal eşitsizliklerin eğitimsel eşitsizliklere doğrudan yansımından ziyade oluşumları, dağıtımsal anlamda eğitim eşitsizliklerinin mekân aracılığıyla yeni toplumsal eşitsizliklere dönüşmesini ifade eder.

Bu noktada, eğitimdeki eşitsizlikler, özellikle de devlet okulları arasındaki farklılaşma, eğitime yapılan kamu yatırımlarına rağmen neden var olmakta ve sürmektedir sorusuna geri dönüldüğünde, teze göre bu sorunun cevabı okul farklılaşmasının nasıl oluştuğunda yatmaktadır. Tezin okul farklılaşmasının nasıl oluştuğu konusunda sosyo-mekansal kapatma kavramına dayanarak geliştirdiği açıklama, popüler okulların, devlet yatırımlarının eksikliği sonucu doğrudan ailelerin sosyal konumlarına bağlı olarak erişebildikleri eğitim hizmetinin farklılaşmasından kaynaklanan eşitsizlikleri ifade etmediğine dayanmaktadır. Sosyo-mekansal kapatma

kavramı, bunun yerine eğitim kaynaklarının eşitsiz coğrafi dağılımı üzerine daha fazla eşitsizlik yaratıldığını ifade etmektedirler. Böylece eğitimde toplumsal eşitsizliklerin yeniden üretilmesinin ötesinde, mekân aracılığı ile eğitimde daha fazla eşitsizliğin yaratılmasını ifade etmektedirler.

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